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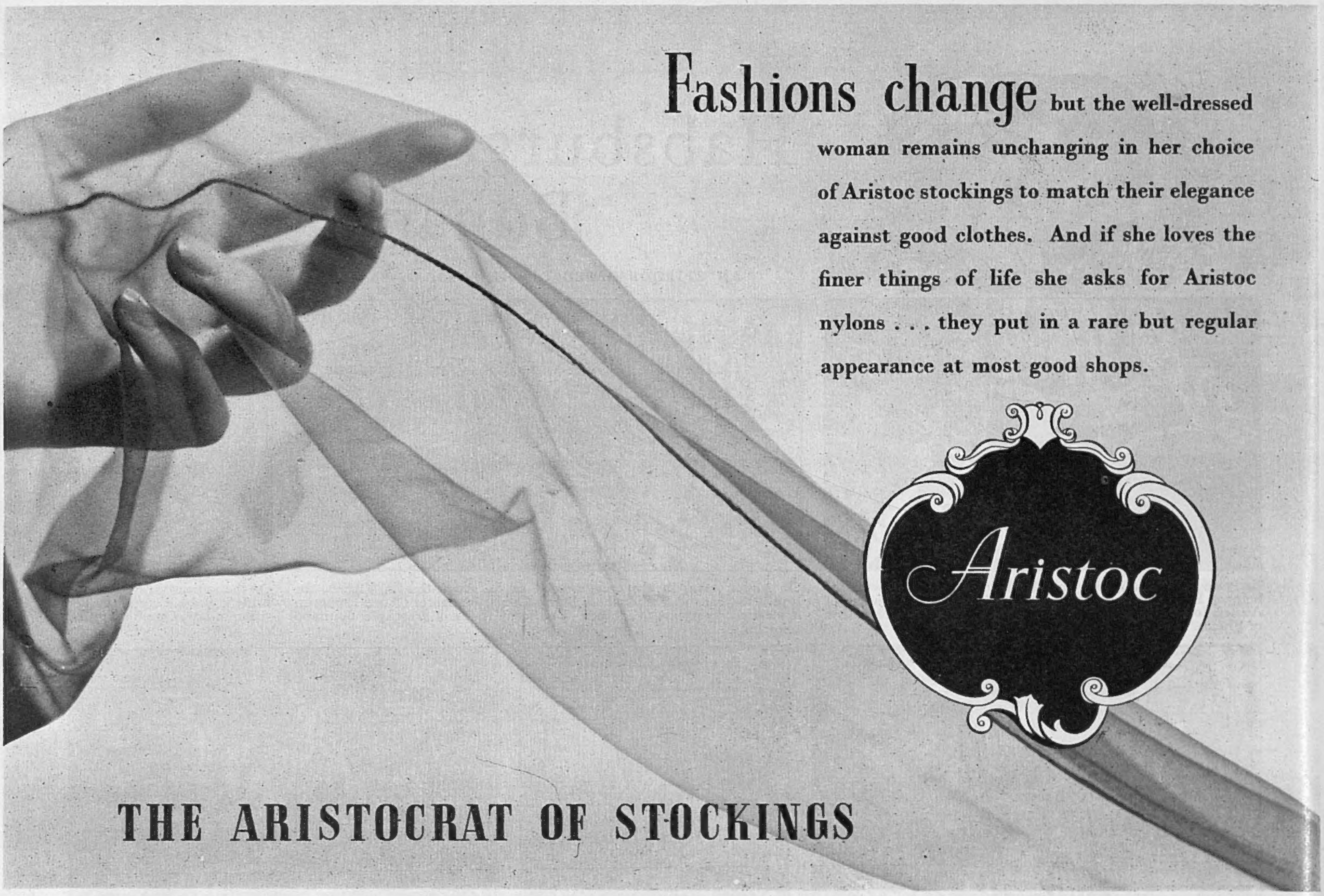
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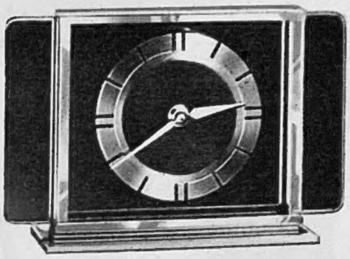

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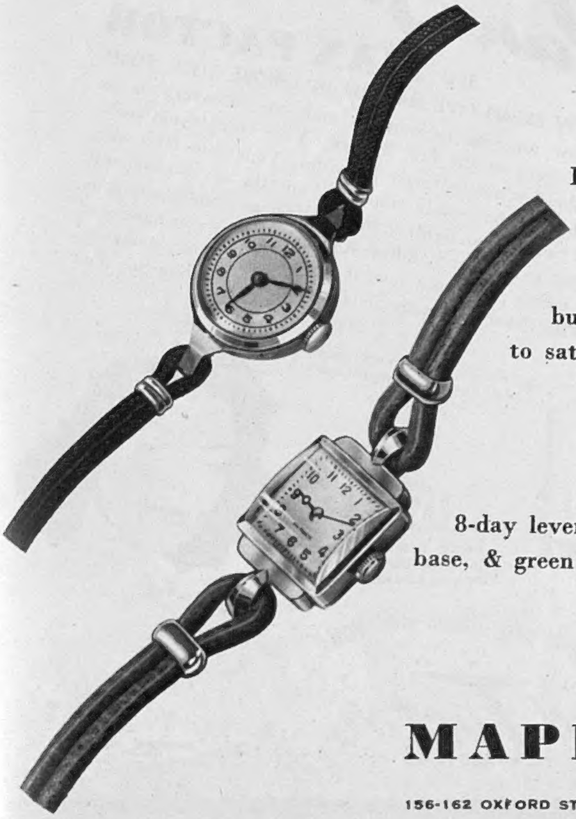

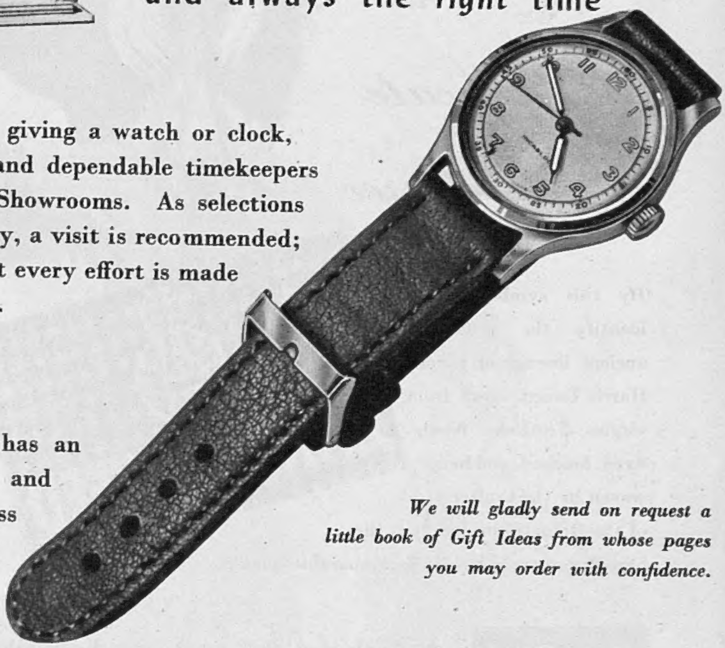

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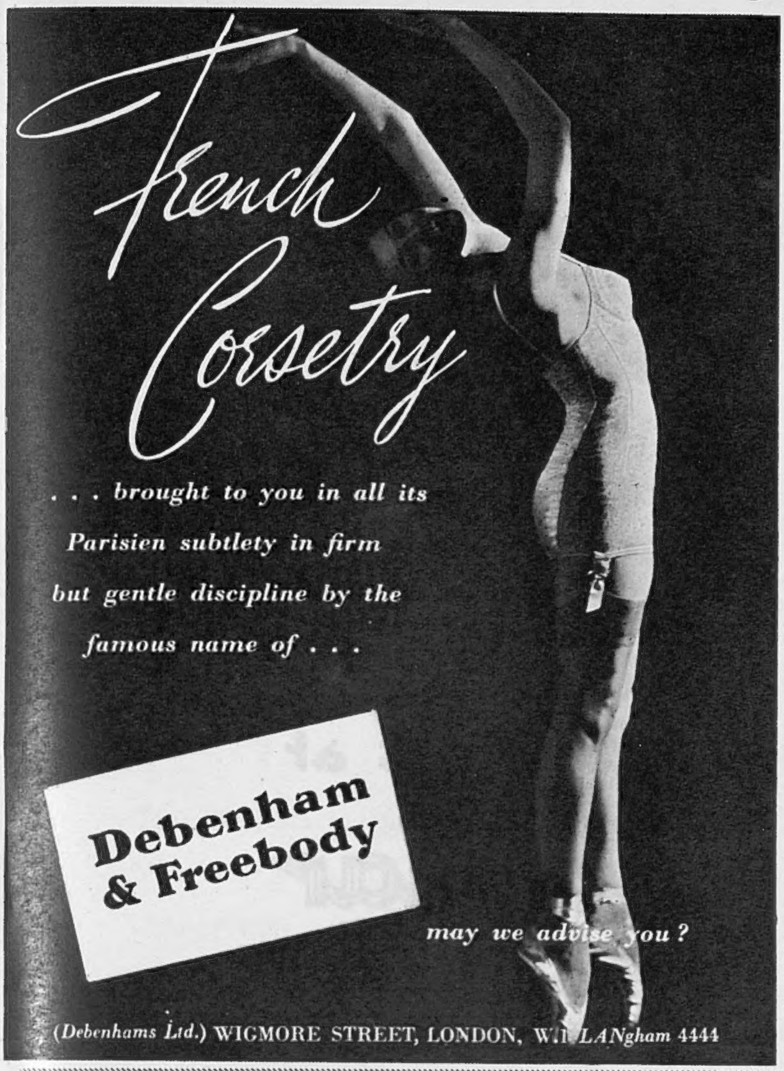

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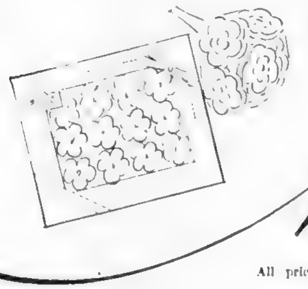

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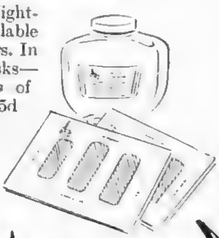

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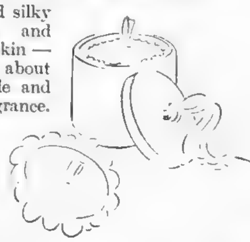

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The Sketch

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 1950

Photographed by Anthony Buckley.

No. 1 TV GIRL

PUBLIC ballot voted eighteen-year-old Petula Clark as favourite TV woman in the 1950 National Radio and Television Awards. With the other winning stars she will receive her silver "mike" at Grosvenor House on December 5. "Discovered" by Mr. Cecil Madden at the age of ten, this young singer and mimic's own intimate TV programme, "Pet's Parlour," is due on November 24.

c

At the Guildhall for the Annual Banquet : London's new Lord Mayor, Alderman Denys Lowson, with the Lady Mayoress, the Hon. Mrs. Lowson.

Sketch-Book

BEVERLEY BAXTER

WHEN we were very young it was a dreadful thing to say of any boy or girl that he or she was conceited. Later in life we seemed to drop the word "conceited" and declared that so-and-so was vain. But roughly we meant the same thing and it was intended to be a vote of censure.

But where can a man of substance get to (for the moment we shall leave out the ladies) unless he has conceit or vanity? Byron had both. Wilde had them to such an extent that even when on trial for his life—for, as he said, all trials are for one's life—he threw away his excellent chance of acquittal by a determination to show off.

Dickens was pompously vain. He dressed like a dandy, and literally killed himself by travelling across America and Britain reading his works in public and laughing or crying according to the state of the narrative. Arnold Bennett was so pleasantly vain that he tried to dress as a dandy and be a Beau Brummel of London, although the integrity of the Five Towns clung to him like an irremovable garment. Franklin Roosevelt was so aware of his own greatness that even in private conversation he seemed to be addressing a multitude.

Stanley Baldwin was an exception, which is perhaps why he is forgotten to-day, although at the time of his premiership he was constantly referred to as the greatest living Englishman. Yet one would think that these men, accustomed to dissect and even disembowel human frailties, would be immune from the weaknesses with which they were so familiar in others.

But familiarity does not always breed contempt; in fact, it frequently breeds admiration. I once asked a doctor whose whole life was devoted to treating the physical ailments of women, whether his profession killed in him the attraction of the female.

"Why?" he answered. "What would you say of an engine that could not only go on running for seventy or eighty years without any replacements, but, in the process, reproduce itself several times over? There is nothing so wonderful in the world as a woman."

WHICH brings me to Bernard Shaw. At least, that was my intention when I started these notes, although I can't quite make out what the doctor has to do with it. Oh yes, I remember. The point is that a recognition of human weakness does not necessarily make one immune to it.

Was Bernard Shaw conceited? Perhaps you will bear with me if I recount my first meeting with him. In 1921 his new play, *Heartbreak House*, was produced at the little Court Theatre at Sloane Square, and the critics gave it a terrible drubbing. "Headache House" and "Jaw-break House" were among the witty epithets which were produced, and the general impression was that the argumentative Irishman had turned out a tedious, foolish piece of work.

It is necessary, to fill in the details of this story, to explain that in those days I was a highbrow. I read poetry, went to hear chamber music, traversed the Art Galleries and was one of the first members of the P.E.N. Club. So I said to a young woman of similar tastes that, in spite of the critics, Shaw should be able to count on people like us if he produced a play. That evening we journeyed to Sloane Square and joined an audience that did not even fill half the theatre.

The play was beautifully acted and superbly produced. The music of the language went to my head like champagne, and also to the pretty head of my companion. In fact, it seemed to us that this was a play of exquisite quality and that the critics, with one or two exceptions, were no better than plumbers' mates who had forgotten their tools. So, being young, we decided to go behind and see the producer, J. B. Fagan.

"Sir," I said, "I have come to apologise on behalf of Fleet Street." Instead of throwing me out he was quite nice about it. "I can't understand," he said, "whether the critics are knaves or fools." We assured him that they were not knaves.

Then vanity or conceit—or perhaps some quality of the crusader—took charge of me and I said that I would make the critics come back to reconsider their verdicts. Fagan shrugged his shoulders and said that the play was coming off at the end of the week. We urged him to keep it on for another week and promised that on the Wednesday matinée I would arrange for Shaw to be there and debate with the critics after the performance was over. He expressed some doubt, but being a very junior member of the *Daily Express* staff I declared that it would arrange everything. So Fagan agreed.

THE *Daily Express* was quite nice about it, but not very excited, and published a signed news-story by me called: "Shaw to Meet His Critics," together with the information that applications for seats should be made to the newspaper. At the same time, tickets were sent to all the critics.

The response was enormous. We could have filled the theatre twenty times over. Everybody who was anybody wanted to be there, and even those who wrongly imagined that they were somebody were equally clamorous. Everything had gone to plan until two days before the matinée, when Fagan called me on the telephone. "Shaw says he won't come." That was all—but it was enough!

Vanity, vanity, all is vanity. What in the Dickens was to be done? My newspaper would look like a fool, and newspapers are sensitive on that point. Lord Beaverbrook would certainly have something to say. The idiocy of the whole thing hit me like a wet towel.

At ten o'clock that night I took up the telephone and called Shaw at his house in the Adelphi. The great man answered the phone himself and in a voice that was parched with nervousness I told him who I was and asked him why he would not come. "Well, my bhoy," he said in a rich Irish brogue, "for one thing you never asked me. But tell me now. Why are you doing this?"

I told him that *Heartbreak House* was a great play, a great play, a great play. It must have sounded like a cracked record, but he listened. Then he asked me what other plays of his I had seen, and I told him how Robert Lorraine had brought *Man and Superman* to Toronto. Then I returned to the cracked record again.

"You 're a queer fellow," said Shaw, "but hire a car and call for me here and we 'll go to the matinée together."

That night London belonged to me. No condemned man reprieved on his way to the gallows could have felt a greater sense of relief.

So on the day we drove to Sloane Square, where a great crowd had gathered, and fought our way to the box which had been reserved. The place was packed with celebrities and nearly all the critics were there. When the play was over the audience called for Shaw and he stood up in the box.

"You have come to see *Heartbreak House* this afternoon," he said. "Whether you like it or not is another question. However, do not worry. Three hundred years hence you will come to see it again."

A lot of people laughed. The old joker was true to form, up to his pranks as usual. But Shaw was supremely if contemptuously in earnest. In the public forum he was announcing his own immortality. Then he went down to the stage, where some refreshments had been arranged, and some of the critics joined him. But nothing much happened, there was no debate, and finally it all fizzled out. Next day a number of the critics generously wrote in their newspapers that their second thoughts were more favourable. Others refused to alter their verdicts. On the whole the play had been given many thousands of pounds'-worth of publicity.

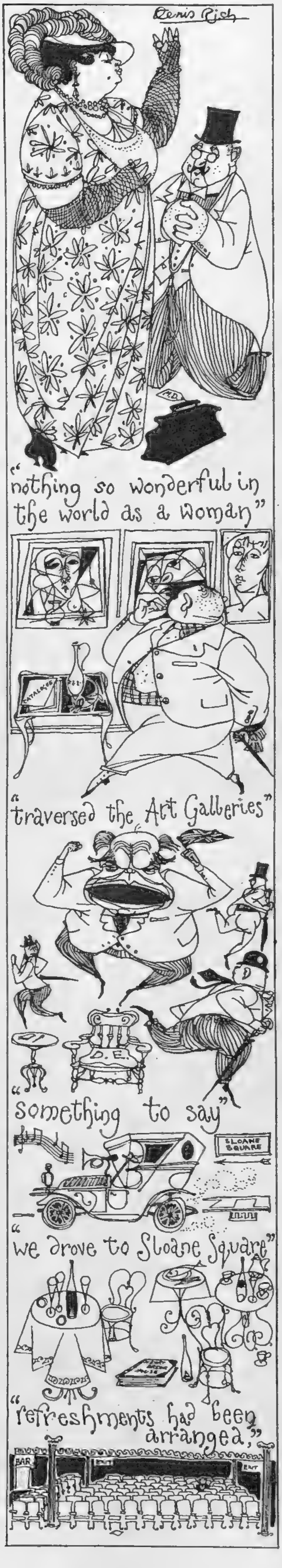
With what result? Next night the theatre was empty. The play closed on the Saturday, the extra week having cost J. B. Fagan money that he could not afford. London was not ready for a play that would force it to think.

Some time afterwards a book came to my house. It was a first edition of *Back to Methuselah*, and in it were inscribed these words: "To Beverley Baxter in heartfelt appreciation for his intervention on behalf of 'Heartbreak House'," followed by Shaw's signature.

IT is a strange story which I have told to-day, but at least it has some bearing on the subject of human vanity both in its rawness and its maturity. Was Shaw wrong to announce his own immortality? A man of genius who doubts himself too often dies with his last breath. Great gifts demand vanity to cushion their owner's soul against the indifference of the mob and the fallibility of critics. All art is a form of expressionism, and every artist faces the threat of crucifixion. He must declare "I am not as other men" even when the world is equally cruel in its hostility or indifference.

Heartbreak House will be played 300 years from now: perhaps 3000 years from now. If Euripides can still ride the centuries and find a hearing for his tragedies, there is no reason why Shaw should ever die. Not for his argument, not for his advocacy, but for the sheer quality of the dramatist he will be understood and enjoyed when the subjects of his plays are as old and forgotten as the original Greek Chorus telling the first-night audience—including the week-end critics—that no man should count himself happy until he is dead.

Beverley Baxter



Three little bridesmaids—Jane Brassey, Carolyn Stewart, Georgina Ward ; the bride and bridegroom ; Lord Ogilvy, the best man ; and three little pages—Reginald Sheffield, Alastair Stewart, Anthony Ward.

At the reception : Miss Jennifer Renwick, Miss Ann Wilson, Mr. Robert Dalby.

LADY ROSE FANE
married
CAPTAIN MACDONALD - BUCHANAN

ON November 3, at St. Peter's, Eaton Square, Lady Rose Fane, daughter of the late Earl of Westmorland and of the Dowager Countess of Westmorland, of Lyegrove, Badminton, Gloucestershire, married Captain John Macdonald-Buchanan, the Scots Guards, son of Major and the Hon. Mrs. R. N. Macdonald-Buchanan, of Cottesbrooke Hall, Northamptonshire. Pipe-majors of the 1st Battalion Scots Guards played "A Highland Wedding" as the pair left the church, and Warrant Officers and N.C.O.s of the regiment formed a guard of honour. The reception was held at the Hyde Park Hotel.

Photographed by Baron.

Mrs. Franz Osborn, wife of the famous pianist, with her son Christopher, and Lady Londesborough.

HIS MAJESTY WAS PRESENT ON REMEMBRANCE DAY AT THE CENOTAPH

Candid Cameo

TED KAVANAGH

By Ian Coster

WHAT a misfit in this atomic age is that man Henry Edward Kavanagh. He cannot drive a car or use a typewriter. Though he nearly became a doctor, he is sceptical about medical science. Why, he is even an old-fashioned Christian who believes in God and an after-life.

And yet this stolid reactionary is the master of a new craft, the craft of writing for radio; and critics, not content with comparing him with Dickens, have credited him with inventing " surrealism in sound."

Red is his hair and pink his complexion. It looks an explosive combination but, sad or mad, he is as quiet in speech and manner as a girl at her confirmation. Fighting Irish he is on both sides—the Kavanaghs of Carlow and the Lorigans of Longford—and no more peaceable man ever failed to trail his coat around the bars and salons of London.

" I 've a terrible temper when I 'm roused," says he. " He 's the best-natured man I 've ever worked for," says his secretary.

Soaked, he was, in the injustices of Ireland and the lore of the patriots (Grandfather Kavanagh, who went to Tasmania and then farmed in New Zealand, saw to that), but he lives with and loves the English. He has lost both his Irish accent (if he ever had one) and the accent of New Zealand, where he was born.

A jaunty green trilby seems to be the only vestige of Irish pride. His clothes stamp him as a well-to-do Londoner; his tie proclaims in yellow and blue stripes that he is a brother Savage. Nobody has maligned his face more than Ted himself. Others have described it as mournful or balloon-like. Ted has come right out and said it is " hang-dog." Describing his troubles of writing on hotel dressing-tables he said: " Every time you look up you are staring at your own blank and bleary face—it 's horrible."

Actually it is a kindly, thoughtful face, high-domed and sparse on top—as most high places are. He affects a crisp little ginger moustache (hangover from his service as sergeant with the N.Z. Forces in World War I. ?), and his eyebrows have a Lucifer-like upward swirl at their outer ends. His eyes are grey-hazel, a colour often found in marksmen and good poker-players. His figure is medium-height and medium-plump.

There was a time, not so long ago, when he was fat: 16½ st. But three months of starvation on orange-juice and hot water tore off 4 st. and reduced his blood-pressure. About this drastic slimming he has some doubts. Unhealthily fat men, he thinks, have done more for the world than fit athletes, and he trots out three examples: Thomas Aquinas, G. K. Chesterton, and Dr. Johnson, all of whom he admires as thinkers.

Not that Kavanagh, fat or just plump, hopes to better the world. He is satisfied if, occasionally, he can make it hold its sides. Yes, Ted regards himself as a comic, and like all successful comedians and humorists works with desperate seriousness at his job, wearing that lugubrious expression as a sort of badge of his trade.

Practitioner in the best bragging medium yet invented (remember Hitler and Mussolini ?), Ted carries modesty so far that it becomes self-effacement. He talks about himself reluctantly as though he couldn't expect anybody to be interested in that unimportant little man.

There is nothing of the thruster about him. Success surprised him after twenty years of hard work and patient persistence. Ted and I have talked about the impetus which pushes men on to fame and fortune, and we agreed that a good physical defect, or an incurable disease, is often the best spur.

The trouble with Ted was that the spur was a small one—the indignity of having red hair. He suffered in his schooldays from the ragging of other boys, but that was not enough to give him a strong success impulse. Had it been so, Ted might well have been a Harley Street specialist or, as he liked the study, a world-famous bacteriologist.

He took medicine at Auckland University and continued at Edinburgh and at Bart's. But he did not take his final. War had intervened and he couldn't settle down to study. Also, the writing bug had bitten him, and the acceptance of " highly comical " articles by college magazines increased the itch. Being in need of regular employment, as he had a wife and two sons to support, he found himself writing technical stuff for a firm of manufacturing chemists.

An early enthusiast for radio, he tickled a cat's-whisker set and, one day, he went to Savoy Hill and timidly suggested that he could provide the infant B.B.C. with some ideas. A suave young man pointed to a small filing cabinet and said: " It 's no use submitting ideas, as that cabinet holds all we want." After that rebuff, Ted retired hurt to the " Coal Hole " and drank alone.

But the B.B.C. did buy a script from him, paying him three guineas—" it was then a fortune." He had mixed up the Grand National, the Boat Race and the Cup Final, and the B.B.C. wrote that they liked the idea but not the writing. Ted was therefore somewhat surprised to hear his script come over the air unaltered. It was spoken by a chap called Tommy Handley, who was then playing the Holborn Empire. Round went Ted and saw Tommy, who said he could do with more material; and so began the long association which came to its full, fantastic flowering in ITMA.

But years of plodding were still ahead for Ted: he wrote trailers for cowboy films—250 of them at 5s. a crack. He began writing a comic column (he still does) for *The Month*, a Catholic magazine in New Zealand. This taught him that the basis of humour is the same for a Stock Exchange joke or a drawing-room jest.

For five years now he has been Ted Kavanagh Associated, Ltd., with a stable of writers including those tall, brilliant co-authors of " Take It from Here," Norden and Muir. Since ITMA finished, Ted's own chores are " The Great Gilhooly," the touring " Radio Ruffles," and television shows. (" Nobody knows how to write television shows yet, but we keep trying.") Gilhooly takes him the best part of a week, and he writes it at home, getting down to his desk about 9 a.m. and writing swiftly as he smokes cigarettes and chews gum.

When ideas are flowing his pen races and he can't read what he has written. That 's a job for his secretary. He does not dictate: " I 've tried it, but I can't stand the look on the girl's face at the drivel she 's supposed to take down."

Ted's two sons are grown up. Kevin, the elder, who has made him a grandfather, is in Ted Kavanagh Associated; Pat, the younger, has sailed for Korea as a second-lieutenant. Every Sunday he is in town, Ted worships at St. James's, Spanish Place, and goes to the local afterwards.

His ambitions are simple: " To travel a bit more and to go on working." His hobbies are reading biographies and travel books and drinking with his cronies. His favourite comedian is Gillie Potter, and he does not think that P. G. Wodehouse is at all funny.

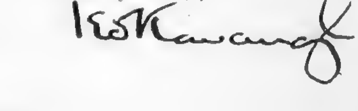
Well, what did I tell you at the start ? He is what would be called in his native country " an old stick-in-the-mud." But it is a term of endearment and, like most similar terms, highly inaccurate.

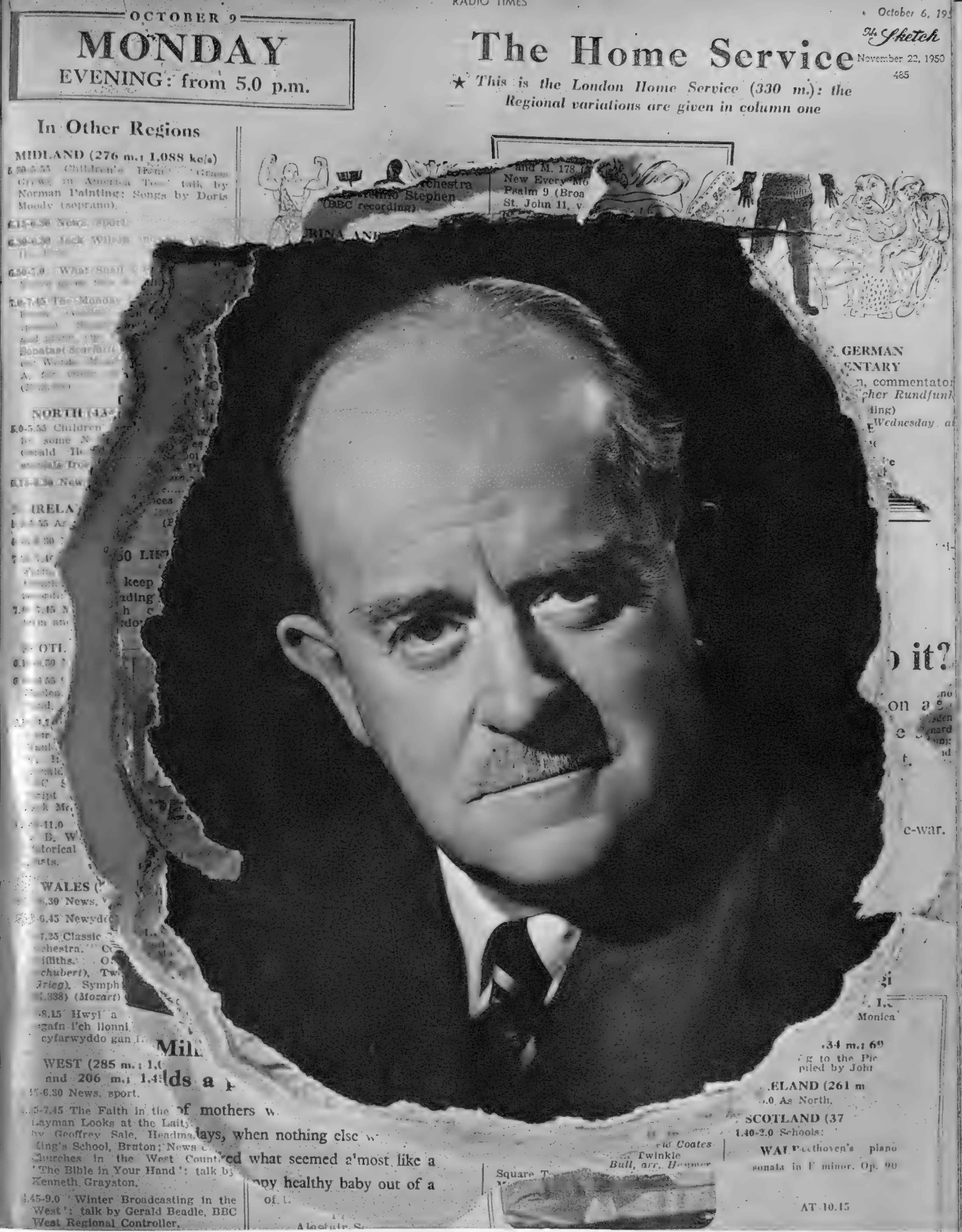
★

Who . . . Me?

OF course, I am a firm believer in the after-life, otherwise what logical explanation could be given for the existence of Ian Coster—the Sartre of *The Sketch*. It is the existence of *this* life I am not so sure about, especially after reading his highly-coloured caricature. He pictures me as a kind of religio-dipsomaniac gyrating between the pew and the pub, the chapel and the jug-and-bottle. My average day, according to Coster, is spent on a kind of pint-to-pint steeplechase round London. How much kinder it would have been to say that I divide my time between Matins and Lord's.

Angus McBean has, on the other foot, been more than kind. There, indeed, is the real thing—or is it ? If only the Editor had commissioned Angus to write the Cameo and Ian to take the photo, what a difference there would have been—or would there ?





Photomontage by Angus McBean.

MASTER OF A NEW CRAFT: TED KAVANAGH

HONOURING AN EDITOR'S JUBILEE

ON November 6, one of the most remarkable banquets ever given was held at Claridge's. In the atmosphere of 1900, more than 200 distinguished guests, including H.R.H. the Duke of Gloucester and the Prime Minister, who made an apt and amusing speech, dined in the light of wax candles in silver candelabra to celebrate Sir Bruce Ingram's "first fifty years as Editor of the *Illustrated London News*." The chairman was Major H. Davenport Price, chairman of Illustrated Newspapers. Vintage wines, generous gift of French wine-growers, accompanied a royal feast of *bisque homard*, sole, York ham, pheasant, foie gras, pineapple with maraschino.

(Other pictures appear on page 488.)

DATE - BOOK

(Our Social Diary)

Nov 1.

(L.) Private view of One-man (W. CRAIG HAINISCH) Exhibition at WALKER'S Galleries. Lady SCARSDALE + Mrs Rupert GLASKIE.

Nov 2.

(R) SIR BRUCE INGRAM decorated with the LEGION of Honour at the French Embassy by Ambassador M. MASSIGLI.

Nov 2.

(L.) Lord FAVERSHAM, Joint Master, talked with LADY IRWIN, before the SINNINGTON Hunt moved off from the Village Green after their Opening meet

( ) Opening also at Lower Whitley Farm, Nr. ford, were the Oxford University Draghounds. Anne RUSSELL sums it all up with joint Masters (L) TOM ARING and PETER ALEXANDER.

(L.) POINTILLISM = a form of painting which gives luminous effect through the surface of small coloured dots. Mr Harry T. MILLER and LADY ROSE at the Combined Cocktail Party + Private View of Redfern Gallery Exhibition of—"POINTILLISTS + their PERIOD"

Nov 6.

INVALID Children's Aid Association Charity Ball at CIRO'S. L-R. Mr. Robin DENT, Miss Valerie HARE, Mr G. GRIFFITH: and Mr. J. HUGHES.

DATE-

Nov 6.

Banquet.- Claridge's for SIR BRUCE INGRAM'S 1st 50 yrs. as Editor of the ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS

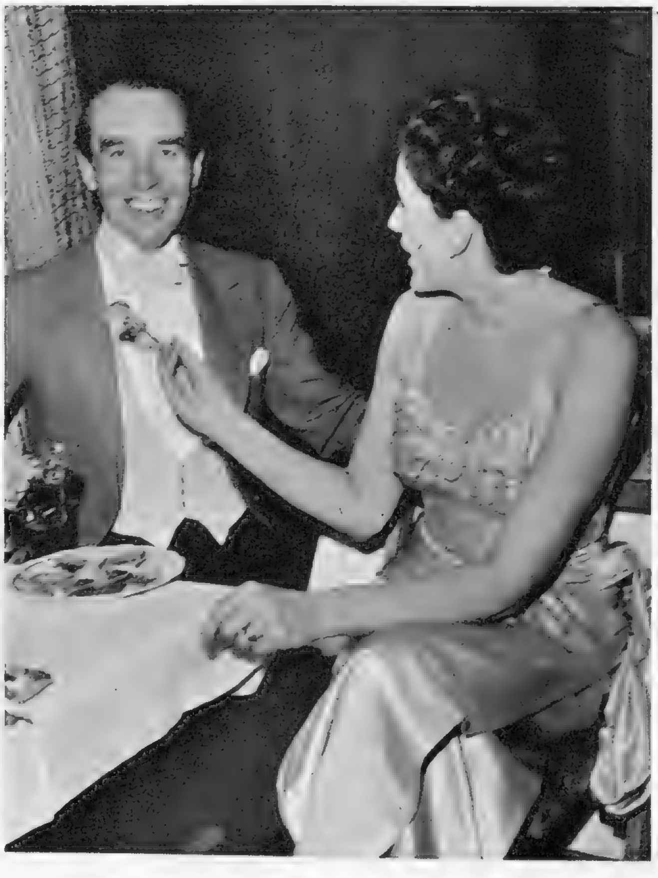
SIR BRUCE compares cigarettes with Duke of Gloucester, & (R) the Chairman, Major Davenport PRICE chats with the PRIME MINISTER.

Mayorca Restaurant.- Lunch Interval for Lord's Taverners (who (a) watch Cricket from the Tavern at Lords (b) Help National Playing Fields and (c) Have PRINCE PHILIP as Patron.

Robertson (BUNNY) HARE, Leonard Thompson, also John SNAGGE, - and BRUCE BELFRAGE (R) background

NOV 8.

(R) Miss Emmy Lou (daughter of Sir Alexander & Alexandra Lady) KINLOCH, marries Mr. Harry (Son of Col. Hon. J.J. and Lady Vio...) ASTOR.



(L) Cocktail Party (32 Bryanston St.) by Dorothy Lady BRUNTISFIELD for Hon. Simon and MRS. WARRENDER.

MRS. PHILIPSON, Mr. & Mrs. MICHAEL BANKIER.

Nov 9

(R). Mrs Alastair MITCHELL feeds the Joint Master - Major MITCHELL during Camberley Staff College Drag Hunt Ball.

-BOOK

Nov. 9.

(R) Princess Alice & Earl of ATHLONE with the Marchioness of CAMBRIDGE (bride's mother) at Newmarket where Lady Mary CAMBRIDGE and Mr Peter WHITLEY (only son of SIR Norman and Lady WHITLEY) were married.
(L) The bride wore a diamond bow brooch, a gift of her Great Aunt, - QUEEN MARY.

Nov 11.

An old family custom to plant Spanish Chestnut tree in grounds of CASTLE LEOD, Strathpeffer, is continued by two-year-old eldest son of Lord TARBAT. 3 Generations witnessing ceremony are Lady CROMARTIE, Lord and Lady TARBAT, & [illegible] Hetton. JOHN R MACKENZIE.

(R) MRS. Lewis DOUGLAS, & her daughter SHARMAN, - escorted to Royal Command Variety performance at the PALLADIUM by Lord BLANDFORD.

Nov 14.

Brigadier J. W. H. GOW, - the Master, leads members of the Lanarkshire and Renfrewshire Hunt through the Streets of HOWWOOD at their opening meet.

(R) Major Patrick TELFER-SMOLLETT, M.C. (H.L.I.) - Son of General Alexander and the late MRS TELFER-SMOLLETT, is engaged to GEORGINA, only child of SIR GIFFORD and the Hon. Lady FOX.

DATE-BOOK

(Abroad)

Oct 30.

FRANCE. Forest of RAMBOUILLET, Near PARIS. A good bag was provided by the FRENCH President's Shooting party. (L.) M Vincent AURIOL & U.S. Ambassador DAVID K. BRUCE examine a bird. (R) Mme. AURIOL, gun in hand, at the "ready."

Nov 3.

NEW YORK. "FOXHUNTER" -Col. Harry LLEWELLYN up- at National Horse Show, Madison Sq. Gdn, and the West Point Challenge trophy (presented by Col. Paul D. HARKINS) to this achievements.

PARIS. (R.) The Comte de PARIS, the Comtesse, eldest daughter Princess ISABELLE attended premiere of Shakespeare's "A Winter's Tale" at the Comédie Française

Nov 5.

PORTLAND, MAINE, U.S.A. Soon after attempt to shoot U.S. President, Miss Margaret TRUMAN set out to sing at a concert. All went well though she admitted that BLAIR HOUSE incident had given her a shock.

Nov 11.

(R) NEW YORK. Count Lanfranco RASPONI, Mrs Manville DRESSELHUYS, Sir Francis EVANS (HBM's Consul General, New York) and Lady EVANS at the opening of METROPOLITAN OPERA SEASON

FROM NEW BOOKS BY P.P.R.A. AND R.A.

LAST week-end was marked by the simultaneous appearance of books by two painters eminent each in his differing manner. Sir Alfred Munnings' racy autobiography is crammed with a large variety of drawings and paintings unexpected by those who know only his slick and brilliant delineation of horses.——Sir William Russell Flint's volume of hitherto unreproduced drawings and sketches in his characteristic elegant manner, is enriched by his own illuminating descriptive notes, a bibliography, and a list of his works in public galleries.

"COME, MY BRAVE STEED AND FOLLOW ME"—an early teen-age drawing from *An Artist's Life*, by Sir Alfred Munnings, K.C.V.O., P.P.R.A., who cannot remember a time when he did not draw. The book is published by the Museum Press at 21s.

"FOUR BACKS," from *Drawings*, by Sir William Russell Flint, P.R.W.S., R.A., published by Collins at £4 4s.

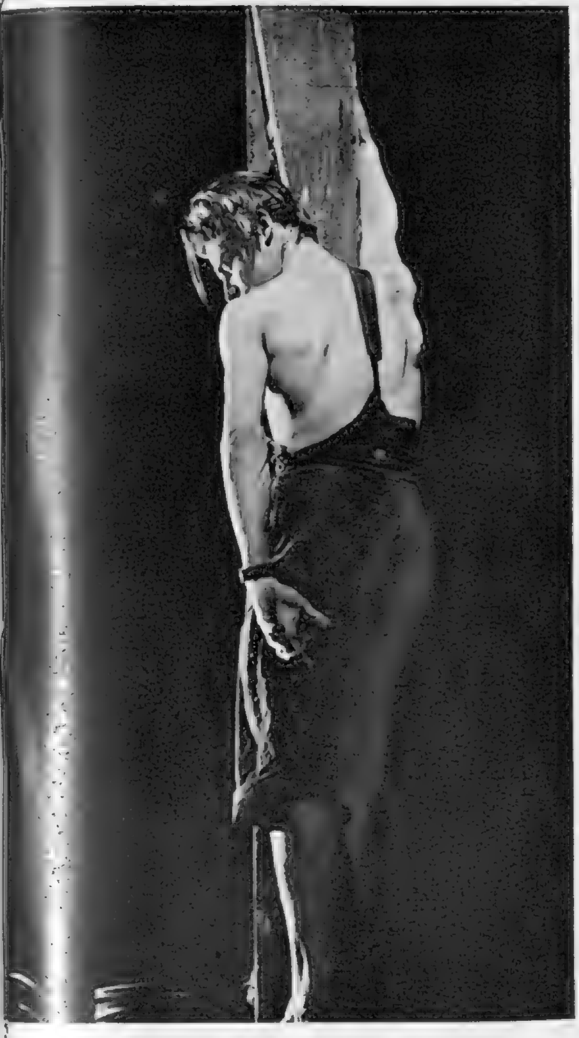
PAMELA MAY IN *NOCTURNE.*

RENÉE JEANMAIRE AND ROLAND PETIT IN *CARMEN.*

NORA KAYE AND HUGH LAING IN *JARDIN AU LILAS.*

GISELLE, WITH PAMELA MAY.

ANOTHER SCENE FROM *GISELLE*. CENTRE: PAMELA MAY.



JEAN BABILÉE IN *LE JEUNE HOMME ET LA MORT*.

BABILÉE AND NATALIE PHILIPPART: *LE JEUNE HOMME ET LA MORT*.

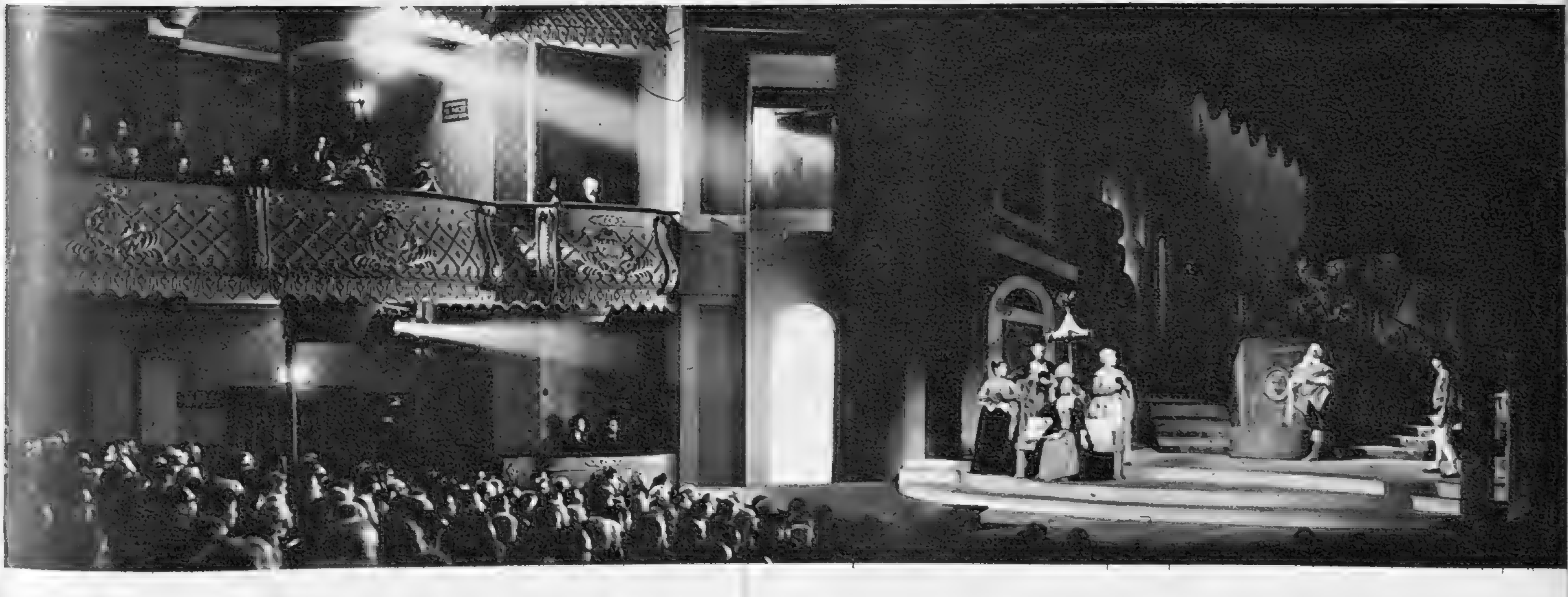
BARON AT THE BALLET

THIS enchanting art has been photographed from every angle by many a cameraman of prestige, but to Baron it has fallen to group in one volume perhaps the most comprehensive collection of ballet photographs ever to be published. They were taken between 1935-1950. From *Baron at the Ballet*, to be issued by Collins on November 30, at 30s., we have chosen the examples shown on these pages. The work covers a wide range of ballet—classical and modern—in Great Britain, France and America, and it has an introduction and a detailed commentary by that great *balletomane* Arnold L. Haskell. The distinguished companies of Sadler's Wells, the Ballet Rambert, Nouveaux Ballets de Monte Carlo, Ballets des Champs Elysées, America's Theatre Ballet, and Colonel de Basil's Ballet Russe, are assessed and illustrated.

MOIRA SHEARER IN *CINDERELLA*.

HERE is a roundabout of recent notable theatrical events—Royal and otherwise. The picture at top, left, taken at the Royal Variety performance at the Palladium, shows the finale, when stars who had entertained the Royal family assembled on the stage, with the Royal box on the right. Left, centre: Princess Elizabeth and Princess Margaret arriving at the Palladium . . . Left: Robert Morley, back from the long run of *Edward My Son* in New York, told a funny story at the Leichner luncheon at the Savoy; made Frances Day and other guests laugh. . . . . Top, right: From the Royal box (left) at Drury Lane Theatre the Queen and the Princesses looked down on the crowded stage where the special matinée performance in aid of the Irene Vanbrugh Memorial Fund was in progress. Right, centre: Stars of the show, including Noël Coward, and Bea Lillie, were presented to her Majesty. . . . Extreme right: Mr. and Mrs. Churchill, visiting the rebuilt Old Vic (blitzed 1941), to see *Twelfth Night*, went backstage during an interval and chatted with Peggy Ashcroft and Roger Livesey. Bottom right: Stage and audience at the reopening of the Old Vic, showing the scene in which Olivia (Ursula Jeans) upbraids Sir Toby Belch (Roger Livesey) for drunkenness.

THEATRICAL OCCASIONS



AT THE THEATRE . . .

Outside the theatre on the opening night.

Antonio and Sebastian.

Lilian Baylis.

WHAT country, friends, is this? It is the Old Vic, and the company is at home again, back in Waterloo Road after nine-and-a-half years. On the night of November 14 crowds packed so densely round the floodlit entrance in the New Cut that it was hard to reach the theatre. Inside, all was well. There again was Lilian Baylis's famous auditorium, now newly-raked, its crimson and gilt in fresh trim, its stage redesigned, but in its spirit still the Old Vic we knew in the 'twenties and 'thirties.

Presently, to a roar of welcome, Dame Edith Evans swept—there is no other word—upon the stage to deliver Christopher Hassall's prologue. "To-night revokes the ten years' curtain-fall." . . . A few minutes later the crimson curtain had risen upon Illyria, and Alec Clunes—once a small-part actor at the Vic—was speaking the first words of Shakespeare in the new-burnished house. He spoke them to an audience packed with lovers of the Vic, famous players, honoured guests. . . . At the end, when "the wind and the rain" had faded and the play was done, a thunder of stamping and cheering showed that the Vic gallery had returned to its own. Insistently the voices called for Hugh Hunt; and at the last the Vic director came down in front of his great company to wish God speed to the theatre and "all who sail in her" through the years to bê.

Orsino listens to Feste's serenade.

Olivia in her wedding dress.

. . with J. C. TREWIN

★ First Choice ★

"TWELFTH NIGHT"

(Old Vic)

THIS is Illyria, lady. Indeed it is, governed by that "noble Duke, in nature as in name" (Alec Clunes, the Orsino, has the tone of high romance), and with a surprising rout of fantastics for the May-morning jest: an Aguecheek who is a knight of the rueful countenance, with a telescopic neck and a mildewed air; a Toby who is an acrobatic old codger, a husky-mellow retired warrior with a schoolboy's heart; and Malvolio himself, who clearly, in his spare time, writes haughty reviews for the loftier Illyrian magazines. We seem at first to be on the sea-front of the town; but we can move in a flicker to a not-too-comfortable garden where Olivia (Ursula Jeans) takes her stately progress and the morning revels of Illyria are played. Into this world (where it is best to lodge "in the south suburbs, at the Elephant") there enters the Viola of Peggy Ashcroft. Her performance has all the rapt wonder of an Illyria which, elsewhere at the Vic, is a little short in the lyric quality. Viola, carelessly done, might be—and has been—thigh-slapping, principal-boyish. Nothing is further from the part, certainly nothing further from the quiet beauty of Peggy Ashcroft. She allows the "willow cabin" to grow upon the air; she is truth itself in the colloquy with Orsino. And in Viola's other mood she is delightfully adrift as a duellist enforced.

This is Illyria, lady, in its "changeable taffeta." There are many ways of presenting it. Who would blame that most discerning producer, Hugh Hunt, for letting the comedians have their will? Roger Livesey is gustily inventive in his knockabout with ladder, stilts and see-saw: indeed, Toby when drunk does everything but a high-wire act. I wonder why Maria must still warn Toby that he and Andrew will be turned "out of doors" when they are already there. Still, this kind of thing happens in a semi-permanent set: no one will worry, or ask why, in the garden scene, Malvolio (a serviceable performance by Paul Rogers) is obviously deaf and blind. There is no time for awkward questions while Robert Eddison's drooping Andrew is playing his own game of statues or crawling under garden seats. (Eddison elsewhere has one quick moment to show the pathos of the man.) In record, this will be remembered as an Illyria of the drolls. On the romantic side, Peggy Ashcroft and Alec Clunes are safe in our hearts; I am less happy with Olivia and Sebastian. And there has been no word about Feste, who, as Leo McKern presents him, is not a gleam of Illyrian moonshine but a rather worn figure with Fabian as competitor at his heels. I am not fond of this, or of the too-urgent Illyrian dancers; but so much in the revival is fresh and exciting that the Ayes far outweigh the Noes. This is Illyria, lady—and back in Waterloo Road.

"POINT OF DEPARTURE"

(Lyric, Hammersmith)

AT the moment Jean Anouilh, from Paris, is the fashionable dramatist. In the present play, Kitty Black's excellent translation of *Eurydice*, he says in effect and depressingly: "Why worry about life when you can die?" With the best will in the world, I don't feel that this is either a helpful or a reasonable view. However, if you can detach yourself from Anouilh's darker meanings and enjoy the piece—naughtily, I suppose—for its theatrical vigour and attack, its sheer daring, you will agree that it keeps you stimulated throughout. Mai Zetterling and Dirk Bogarde (but especially Miss Zetterling) act movingly as the lovers who meet only to be separated. The piece, which can both exasperate and excite, is almost certain to reach the West End. When it does, watch especially for the two railway-station scenes produced by Peter Ashmore with so much imaginative skill.

"PARTY MANNERS"

(Princes)

TOWARDS the end of Val Gielgud's comedy, the Earl of Eltham—presented in his best old-port manner by Raymond Lovell—observes with wisdom: "The only consistent political belief held by the English is that all politicians are funny." After the extraordinary tap-up over *Party Manners*, some of us will think politicians funnier still. But by now that dispute has dimmed: the vital point is that this comedy does flare up well in the theatre, and it is performed with good cheer by all concerned at the Princes. Mr. Lovell's part is sure-fire. Michael Hordern, too, is uncommonly good. The published version of the play has an agreeable preface by the author. "Audiences," says Mr. Gielgud, "will be able to judge for themselves whether it was reasonably fair or sensible to pillory a *jeu d'esprit* as hyæna-fascist propaganda. For myself, I have no doubt of the verdict." True!

WE TAKE OFF OUR HAT TO . . .

FATHER FURNEAUX, for ruling over Mother's domain.

WHILE his wife administers the garden, Mr. J. D. Furneaux, London householder and father of two sturdy youngsters, is King of the Kitchen—which probably accounts for his winning the Fathers' Cookery Competition held at the Mothercraft Exhibition in Westminster's Central Hall. The five other finalists took off their chefs' caps to his winning Chinese curry.

THE OLOWO OF OWO, for adding his Nigerian glamour to that of the Empire girls.

A VISITOR from the Empire, Nigerian Chief Oba Alaiyeluwa Olagabegi II., the Olowo of Owo, was a guest at the Empire Theat e in Leicester Square, where he saw a private view of the new film, *King Solomon's Mines*. Backstage he said "Hello" to the Empire Girls, and admired the costumes they had worn for the Royal Film Performance.

MRS. NELLIE JAMES, for saving many people from drowning.

NEWEST addition to the fast-growing list of medals and certificates for life-saving and swimming awarded to Mrs. James, of Battersea, is a Royal Humane Society Certificate honouring her rescue of a fully-clothed man from drowning in the Thames. Her son Douglas, at their home in Marney Road, is custodian of her collection, which now numbers twenty.

JOHN NORTHCOT, for donning the sandwich-boards in a good cause.

LEADING his little band of volunteer sandwichmen to raise funds for his church on St. Martin's Day, was the 6-ft. curate of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, John Northcot, a twenty-six-year-old ex-Guards officer ordained a few months ago. He explained to donors that half the proceeds of his appeal would be used for the restoration of London's poorer churches.

. . . AND WE APPLAUD

Photographed by John Vickers.

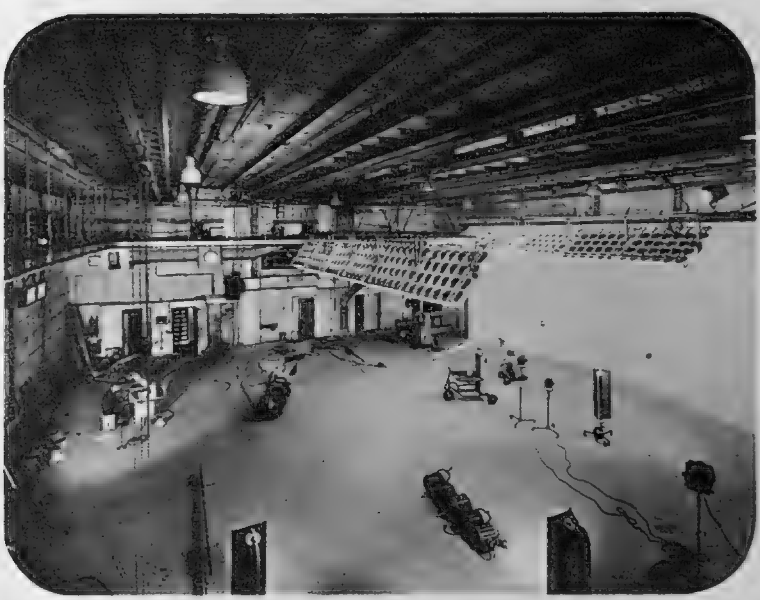
HUGH HUNT,

for his opening production at the rebuilt Old Vic Theatre

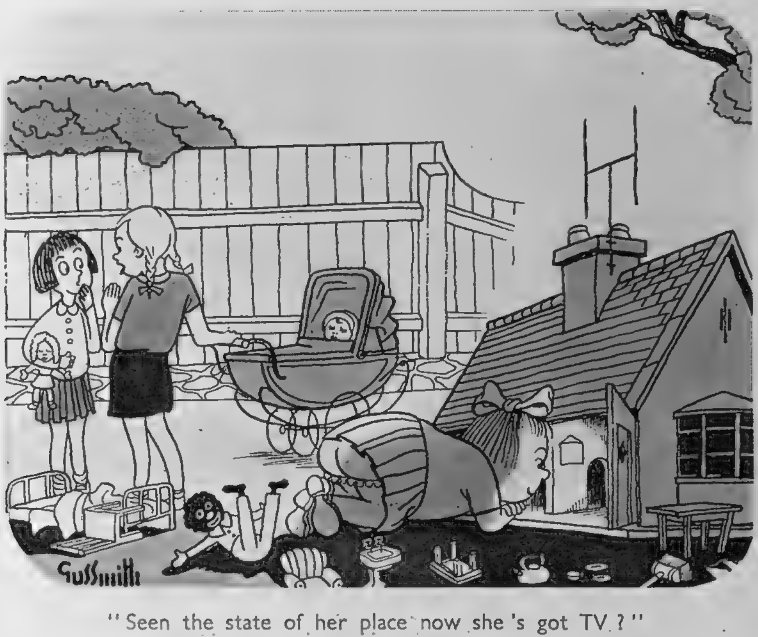
ON November 14 Hugh Hunt produced a worthy version of *Twelfth Night* to reopen the new Old Vic in its old home in the Waterloo Road. In a curtain speech he spoke of the struggle to achieve this restoration, adding : "To-night we have begun a new chapter of the Old Vic. We have come back to our own South Bank, not just as poor relations of the West End, but as an equal partner in the development of the national theatre."

The Vienna Boys Choir, which recently caused a sensation at the Royal Albert Hall, gave a successful television broadcast in the children's programme. They sang Viennese folk songs under the direction of Harold Hedding.

Another item in "For the Children" was a specially-adapted version of "Ballet for Beginners." Here are four members of the B.B.C.'s newly-formed permanent company of dancers in a classical pose.



A general view of one of the spacious studios at Lime Grove, Shepherd's Bush, which is all too slowly taking over from Alexandra Palace. The new and more efficient equipment can be seen.



"Seen the state of her place now she's got TV?"

TELEVISION

by CYRIL BUTCHER

WHY all this fuss about repeated programmes? The fact that *Richard II.* was performed three times seems to have brought to a head yet another television controversy. There have been dirty cracks by various columnists, and numerous viewers have felt strongly enough about the matter to take up arms and write to their pet newspapers. While it is most gratifying that television should hold the interest of the public to such an extent that a new row starts every few weeks, this particular headache strikes us as being a pretty fatuous one.

To repeat a play or major production seems a perfectly logical and desirable thing to do. No one complains that the local cinema shows the same picture three times a day for a whole week. There is no reason why they should; people like to take their amusement in their own time. Why, then, this objection to giving the viewer a choice of two or three evenings in which to see Ally Pally's principal offering of the week? The argument against the repeats seems to boil down to an accusation that one is *forced* to see the same show twice, or miss an evening's television. That conjures up a perfectly awful picture of how Mr. and Mrs. John Bull spend their leisure time. One pictures them sitting night after night, their eyes glued to the cathode-ray tube, unwilling to miss a second of it. That, of course, is nonsense. But should it happen not to be nonsense, if indeed there *are* folk who have let television become a drug to such an extent that they automatically view everything that is transmitted, then the repeat nights provide a salutary break in a soul-destroying routine.

EARLIER in the year we waxed somewhat hotly on another headache, which was then occupying quite a bit of Press space: the possibly undesirable effect of television on children. The hierarchy has solved that one in a most satisfactory way, by providing the youngsters with a daily programme of their own, and making the production of it a separate department. This programme is still the only one that regularly comes from the new studios at Shepherd's Bush, which up to the other day we had not yet seen. So with a dual object we went along there to have a "look-see."

The studios themselves, of course, were built for a film company and were designed as such. After the cramped, makeshift accommodation of Alexandra Palace, with which we had become so familiar, it was like stepping into a new world—a world of space and adequate facilities. It was heartening to see the new equipment, too—

"Peter Rabbit and His Friends" is now a firm favourite with the children, who follow their adventures with keen interest. These glove puppets, Johnny Chuck and Peter Rabbit, are wielded by Sam and Elizabeth Williams.

Beryl Kaye and Tommy Linden danced together in "Pictures in the Fire"—an entertaining item from "Kaleidoscope," the magazine programme which has been revived for the winter.

though one cannot help being impatient at the slowness with which the move is being carried out.

However, it was delightful to meet the personnel responsible for the Children's Programme. At its head is amiable, kindly Cecil Madden, who has been with television since the earliest days. In fact, he was the first regular television producer, and has done a wide range of donkey work ever since. He told us something of his plans, which have been crystallising steadily since he took over the department. He is wise enough to know that children are creatures of habit, so he has laid down a regular schedule for each day of the week. On Sunday there will be a play—in nearly every case specially written for television. Monday is to be dedicated to the boys with an adventure film, such as the *Renfrew of the Mounties* series. Tuesday is the girls' turn, with some suitable novel dramatised in serial form. Wednesday will produce a mixed bag of variety, the Children's Newsreel (an excellently done feature), ballet, music, or nature-study. Thursday is the day for documentary programmes, and Friday is devoted to sport. The week ends with two alternating magazine programmes which promise to be great fun.

So, with this development, children should feel themselves really well catered for. We have seen several of these broadcasts and are filled with admiration for the tact and good taste with which they are done. There is no hint of "playing down" to juvenile minds, and not for a minute are they shy-making, even to an adult. We bestow our personal benison on the new department and wish it all possible success.

NOW we turn to more mature business. Or do we? For it is doubtful if J. M. Barrie ever really grew up. Certainly his play, *The Little Minister*, shows all the marks of a fresh, young mind which still holds that sincerity is not a crime. Nothing very world-shaking happens. The daughter of a local Forfarshire squire dresses up as a gypsy, falls in love with the local parson and he with her. Through that simple pattern are woven the most delicate threads of characterisation, humour and pathos. It is a happy little play, yet we found our dinner-party of worldly guests quite dewy-eyed at the finish. Emrys Jones, as the young minister, brought to his performance exactly the right touch of humourlessness, without which Barrie's whimsical fun falls to the ground. Joy Parker, as the unmanageable Babbie, was a most welcome débutante to television. May we see her again soon, please?

Next we come to the first of the plays which represent Ally Pally's contribution to the Robert Louis Stevenson centenary celebration—*Tusitala*, by Leonard J. Hines and Frank King. This attempted to give a biographical sketch of the great story-teller's life, in four episodes. As a documentary the object was achieved, but as a play it inevitably lacked continuous dramatic suspense. Episodic plays make the actor's problem somewhat difficult, and in this case the performances could only be described as adequate. Andrew Faulds, as Stevenson, tried hard and did not lack sincerity, but never really moved us to the extent that we had a right to expect. However, *Tusitala* was a field day for the producer, and with this effort Michael Barry can chalk up yet another success on his score sheet.

"Kaleidoscope" is back with us again. Before seeing the latest version we were wondering if this veteran hadn't perhaps had its day, and whether, in this New Deal in variety programmes which has been promised, it might not be one of the programmes which could be let lie. But we are happy to say that it has come up smiling in its latest dress and makes a lighthearted hour's entertainment. The Puzzle Corner item, which once used to drag all over the programme, has been speeded up by Ronnie Waldman.

The Terry-Thomas show, "How Do You View?" is not our cup of tea. Even the title makes us squirm. But we try to be broad-minded enough to realise that our poison is quite possibly someone else's *chateaubriand* steak. So, while deploring the archness of Mr. Terry-Thomas, we must admit that this programme is slick and well contrived. (Bouquet to Bill Ward, the producer.) We hope that Avril Angers has come to stay in this series.

IN the field of Outside Broadcasts there were two major events which the television cameras ably covered. The first was the Lord Mayor's Show, passing through Trafalgar Square. This was memorable for its excellent pictures; the procession itself was on the sombre side—but, then, you can't expect the theme of Civil Defence to produce a cavalcade of riotous fun. The second was the Service of Remembrance from the Cenotaph. This was really superbly done. The overall shots of the huge crowds and the intimate close-ups, alternating with each other, brought home vividly to the viewer the emotion and significance of this supreme service. What a pity that the tele-film, shown later in the day, went wrong.

Come to think of it, quite a few things have been going wrong lately. While we appreciate the charming apology which follows each *contretemps*, we feel that it would be more to the point if fewer calamities were "beyond our control," and that more thought was given to preventing breakdowns. After all, the customer is entitled to judge by results.

OUR CRITIC'S CHOICE

Cecil Madden, who might well claim to be the "Daddy" of Television, is now fathering the Children's Programmes. He has inaugurated a schedule of broadcasts for them which should cater for all their tastes without making them feel that they are being patronised.

OUR BOOKSHELF

by RUPERT CROFT-COOKE

THE SCARLET SWORD. By H. E. Bates. (*Michael Joseph ; 10s. 6d.*)
A BREATH OF AIR. By Rumer Godden. (*Michael Joseph ; 9s. 6d.*)
SHADOW ON THE BRIDGE. By Betsey Barton. (*Gollancz ; 10s. 6d.*)
THE BACKWARD BRIDE. By Aubrey Menen. (*Chatto and Windus ; 8s. 6d.*)

IT might almost be supposed that someone had "dared" Mr. Bates to write a novel about a Catholic convent being besieged and gutted by Pathans and Afridis, since a more difficult task for this writer could scarcely be imagined. Yet in *The Scarlet Sword* he has made such a plucky attempt and come so near to being convincing, that one is again impressed by his astonishing virtuosity. This is not to my mind a very good novel, because it makes one conscious all the time of the author's efforts and his painful resolve to be authentic at all costs. But it is a very slick and polished affair, carefully planned, ardently realistic and smoothly easy to read. Its characters, indeed its whole conception, remind one of the days of *Grand Hotel* and *Stamboul Train*, for they have been picked and gathered with the same artless care, and they are shown clearly in one and sometimes in two dimensions. There is, of course, the war correspondent called Crane, a useful vehicle for auctorial impressions. There is a nurse from Glasgow, a wildly improbable Indian dancer, and an English mother and daughter. The character of the English Colonel provides a nice change, for he is not stout and blustering, but young and bantering. And there is a lively and well-trained chorus of nuns, Sikhs, Hindu women, children and priests. The most carefully-drawn character is that of Father Simpson, the blundering, forgetful, tactless visionary who starts the book as a helpless and untidy piece of background and ends it as a hero astride the landscape.

The horrors of the ten days spent by this random posse of people in the hands of the hillmen are adequately described. There is no intention to shock or nauseate the reader and yet he is made to suffer his share of sympathetic revulsion. Altogether, as a piece of persuasive story-telling by a very experienced writer who can make his images glitter and his metaphors click into place, the book deserves examination. But I find it as disappointing as the author's Burmese tales, and shall be the first to welcome his return to England, when that comes about.

IT happened that I read straight on into Rumer Godden's *A Breath of Air*, a story which quite deliberately unfolds against an imaginary background, and I found the island of Terraqueous as vivid and credible as the Mission in Kashmir. But here the very aim is fantasy, and to heighten the effect the author has chosen to use the theme of *The Tempest*. Prospero is a Mr. Van Loomis, Miranda his daughter Charis, and the story opens with the shipwreck which was to be anticipated.

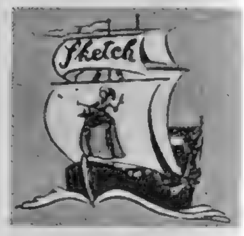
Frankly, I cannot see the point of re-telling an Elizabethan fairy story against a modern background. It seems to me as silly as producing *Hamlet* in modern dress. It is all very ably done, and there is a certain amount of mild pleasure to be obtained from spotting the Shakespearean characters in their up-to-date guise, but this palls all too quickly. The story never was much *as* a story—a mere string of incidents on which Shakespeare hung some of his loveliest poetry. Why then revive it without that poetry, without drama, without Shakespeare ? Miss Rumer Godden is far too good a novelist to furbish up old themes, and we cannot spare her original mind for the time it must have taken to complete this. So once again a disappointment, but not one which will make us any less eager for this author's next novel.

SHADOW ON THE BRIDGE, within its own slender limits, is a very beautiful book, free of jars, uncertainties, or exasperations for the reader. It is set in an American girls' college, with a headmistress who might have ruled from the daïs of one of our own expensive schools for young ladies. Conformity is the keynote of Cragmere : etiquette, convention, good uniform taste. This is all admirably suited to a character such as Jane Stetson, the president of the Student Council and a true piece of young American womanhood, but to Alida Grant, the only daughter of a millionaire, a curious unhappy creature, and to Deborah Lane, the sophisticated new arrival, it means misery and isolation. They struggle against odds, watched by the nice young women about them, and when there is a series of mysterious fires it is not surprising that Alida is suspecte The story climbs through delicately detail incidents, often very movingly described, to unholy tragedy which is made grim by the fa that it need never have happened. There is undertheme of the warfare between Alida a the headmistress in which the headmistress w every battle but the last one, a complete triumph for the girl. This novel is not on the grand scale, nor is it complicated by symbol or argument. It tells an exquisitely faithful and moving little story with grace and conviction. I recommend it heartily.

MR. AUBREY MENEN is beginning resemble that young man in the subu whose friends think him a natural comedi and tell him that he ought to be on the sta In *The Backward Bride* he rolls his sleeves, se his jaw and says : Just watch me. I 'll sp their sides. I 'll kill 'em laughing. I 'll have Corsican bandit coming to England with h favourite nephew. The nephew shall be a highbrow young man, newly-married to an embarrassingly natural young woman, but his passion in life is to be the writing of Professor Lissom, the radio philosopher. Then I 'll make the nephew too devoted to the Professor's teachings to be a good husband to his primitively Catholic wife. Then Professor Lissom shall try to seduce the wife, and the bandit and nephew shall go in pursuit, and I 'll be able to work in cracks at Existentialism and psychiatry, and what not. What a scream it will be ! What a side-splitter ! What dialogue ! What situations !

All this enthusiasm can be felt very plainly as one reads ; all this confidence that the reader will have a whale of a good time. But enthusiasm and confidence remain singularly uninfectious. In other words, the story does not come off. Mr. Menen has chosen one of the most tricky and precarious of *metiers*. If it succeeds, as it did in his *Prevalence of Witches*, it means glorious fun with just that whimper of pathos which Charles Chaplin gives us. If it fails it is the most dismally damp squib of them all And this time it has failed quite miserably Still, I for one shall await the author's next book without despair.

"WITH BEST WISHES"



IT is by no means too early to think of Christmas presents, especially for friends overseas, and those in search of a gift a little out of the ordinary will find that a year's subscription to *The Sketch* will be very much appreciated.

Each fortnight as the new copy arrives the recipient will be reminded afresh of the kind thought and good wishes of the friend at home in Britain.

Orders for subscriptions for *The Sketch* to be sent overseas can now be taken. They should be addressed : The Subscription Department, *The Sketch*, Commonwealth House, 1, New Oxford Street, London, W.C.1, together with the name and address of the person to whom the copies are to be sent, and enclosing the price of the subscription—Canada : £2 7s. 6d. ; elsewhere abroad : £2 10s.

BOOKS IN BRIEF

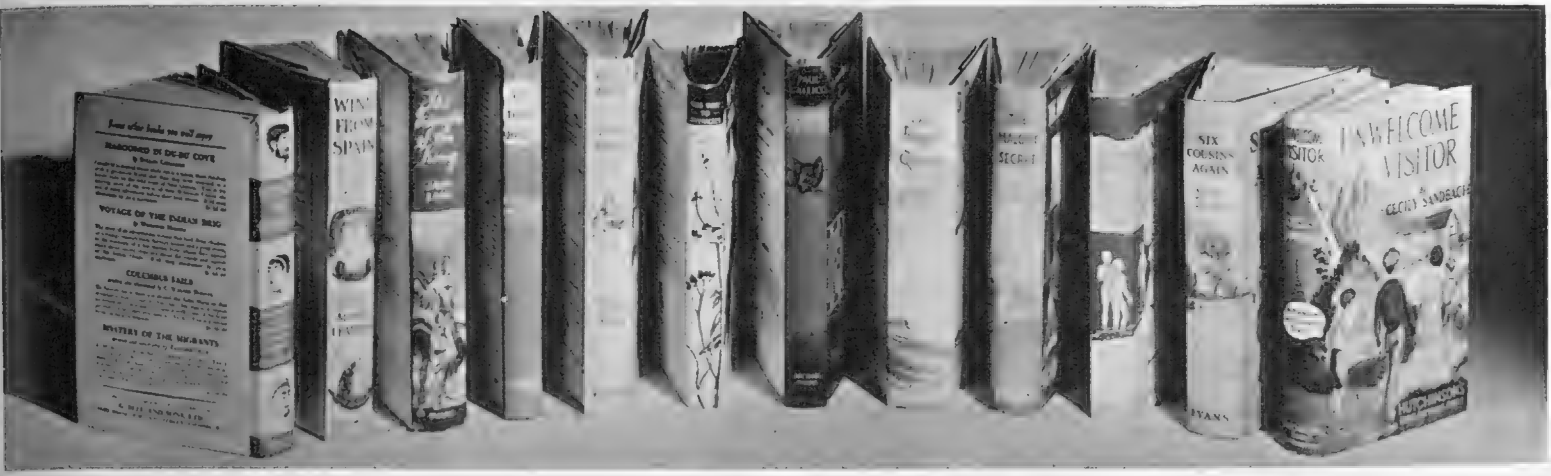
DARK BAHAMA.
By Peter Cheyney. (*Collins ; 8s. 6d.*)
Cut precisely to the usual pattern. Cupidity, murder and sex.

THROUGH THE UNICORN GATES.
By George Millar. (*Heinemann ; 10s. 6d.*)
English country stuff with exaggerated characters, but with a certain grotesque vitality which makes it readable.

RIDE HOME TO-MORROW.
By Evan John. (*Heinemann ; 12s. 6d.*)
The Crusades. But with scholarship and distinction. A really good historical novel which carries one easily to its scenes and among its people.

ANYBODY CAN DO ANYTHING. By Betty Macdonald. (*Hammond and Hammond ; 10s. 6d.*)
More light-hearted autobiography by the author of *The Egg and I*.

FORTY-THREE CANDLES FOR MR. BEAMISH.
By Pamela Barrington. (*Evans ; 9s. 6d.*)
Murder story in which the reader knows the murderer. A clever piece of crime psychology.



CHILDREN'S BOOKSHELF

by RUPERT CROFT-COOKE

IT seems to me that each year brings an improvement in books for the young. There is less tendency to talk a special language or to write in the idiotic jargon which people use in addressing pets and babies. Many writers actually say "small" instead of "teeny-weeny," a word which is as readily understood by the most backward intelligence, and there is far less of the conventional hocus-pocus about elves and bunny-rabbits. This does not mean that the books are less romantic or fantastic—they are, if anything, more so. But they do assume that children have young, inexperienced, inquisitive, lively minds, and are not giggling imbeciles.

Here is one which I should like at once to make my Children's Book of the Year—*Odysseus the Wanderer*, by Aubrey de Selincourt (Bell; 8s. 6d.). Indeed, this re-telling of the Odyssey in delightful quiet prose reminds one a little of Lamb's re-telling of the Shakespearean stories. And what a fresh, exciting adventure tale it makes in this form, with excellent drawings by Norman Meredith.

There are two historical tales for which rather overwritten periods have been chosen—the year of the Armada and the six weeks in the life of Charles II. which followed the battle of Worcester. Moyra Charlton, in *Wind from Spain* (Methuen; 9s. 6d.), sees the Armada from among a big family at Pendellion, in Cornwall, and Jane Lane, in *The Escape of the King* (Evans; 8s. 6d.), revives the Royal Oak and other tales and legends of Charles's escape. *The Three Queens*, by Margaret Priestley (Faber; 8s. 6d.), may be historical, or geographical, or prophetic—it is imaginary in time and setting but carries the reader to its nowhere most effectively.

There are three animal stories of the more mature sort—for children of eight to fourteen. *Greatheart*, by Joseph E. Chipperfield (Hutchinson; 8s. 6d.), is a rather sentimental story about an Alsatian which has, however, some quite beautiful drawings by C. Gifford Ambler. *This Way to Greenacres*, by Maribel Edwin (Longmans; 8s. 6d.), is a pleasant story about a boy and girl in a white house who try to adopt a hare called Lop, and of the hare's adventures when he returns to a wild life. *Jennie*, by Paul Gallico (Michael Joseph; 9s. 6d.), is a gorgeous thing about a small boy transformed into a cat. It is told with quite masterly assurance and humour and is at times almost painfully real. A very strong recommendation, this, with a warning that it is the kind of book which will be bagged by grown-ups, who will, however, read it quickly.

Now a whole bunch of straight stories for boys and girls. *The Badgers of Quinion*, by Kathleen Mackenzie (Evans; 6s.), is about a peer's daughter and espionage; *The Malory Secret*, by Gladys Mitchell (Evans; 6s.), concerns a schoolgirl detective, a precious manuscript, a fire and a kidnapping; while *We Never Thought of That*, by P. M. Lovell (Heinemann; 8s. 6d.), is described as a holiday story about the "gay South of France" with a note of realism when English visitors find that all their money is spent. *Six Cousins Again*, by Enid Blyton (Evans; 7s. 6d.), mixes the right prescription—farms, animals, poachers, gypsies, dogs and horses. *Unwelcome Visitor*, by Cecily Sandbach (Hutchinson; 5s.), has a strong plot with jewel thieves and a bogus aunt arriving to claim three children in a lonely seaside cottage. *Lodgers at Highlands*, by Elizabeth Tarrant (Evans; 5s.), is a girls' school story in the true tradition, with two schools "at daggers drawn" thrown together by a fire in one of them. Enmity, intrigue, and a happy ending.

Most writers would find it easier to write a blank-verse drama or a new work on physics than to add a dozen to the world's stock of fairy stories. But Alison Uttley, in *The Cobbler's Shop* (Faber; 7s. 6d.), attempts that very thing and is by no means unsuccessful. She is no Grimm, Andersen or Wilde, though her stories partake a little of them all, and have a whimsical exuberance of their own. There is whimsy of a more emotional sort in *Out of This World*, by Shirley Goulden (Allen; 6s.), which is disappointingly illustrated by David Langdon.

There is only one animal story for the very young, but it is a particularly good one about a mongrel who "looked a mixture of Basset Hound, Dachs and Spaniel, had a white-spotted chest, a good head and large brown eyes." His name is Brandy, and in *Brandy Tells His Story* (Peter Garnett; 6s.), Kenneth Hare-Scott interprets for him, while Nigel C. Mould provides the illustrations. A more sophisticated piece of fantasy about animals is *Flossie and Bossie*, by Eve le Gallienne (Faber; 8s. 6d.). This is a droll and readable story about two barnyard hens—readable, I mean, by any standards. I found it so absorbing that I completely forgot that I was supposed to be reading a children's book. *Soochow the Marine*, by Reginald Owen and Paul Lees (Putnam; 9s. 6d.), comes from America and tells how a dog went through the war with Japan not as a police dog or a regimental mascot but as a properly-enlisted member of the Fourth Regiment of the United States Marine Corps.

Two books about two very different sports are *Captain of England*, by Billy Wright (Stanley Paul; 9s. 6d.), a straightforward autobiography by the youngest footballer to lead England's team; and *The Pony Club Annual*, published by the Naldrett Press for the British Horse Society at 10s. 6d.

Three boys' adventure novels by Eric Leyland are issued as *The Adventure Omnibus* (Odhams; 6s.). They are "Danger Ahead," "Pirates of the Plains" and "Treasure of the Tredegars." This is good value for money for young readers. Eric Leyland also edits *The Boys' Book of Adventure* (Evans; 10s. 6d.), a solid-looking quarto in bold type with yarns by Garry Hogg, Leonard Gribble, Taffrail, and other good story-tellers in this field. Two more big compendia at remarkably low prices are *The Children's Own Wonder Book* (Odhams; 6s.) and *The Wonder Book of Comics* (Odhams; 8s. 6d.).

Lastly, there is a book in the spirit of the American scientific marvel strips—*The Moth Men*, by George E. Rochester (Hutchinson; 5s.).

"THE MUDLARK."—A not-very-memorable film except for the brilliant performance of Alec Guinness as Disraeli. He is seen above with Irene Dunne as Queen Victoria.

FILMS IN BRIEF

"THE ELUSIVE PIMPERNEL."—Everybody's old darling story, *The Scarlet Pimpernel*, thrust at us again in a series of outrageous Technicolor close-ups: false noses, blackened teeth, varnished cheeks, heavy pink torsos. In spite of Margaret Leighton and some taking exteriors, a crude and unlovely picture.

"OCCUPE-TOI-D'AMELIE."—Danielle Darrieux and Jean Desally in a French farce equivalent to our *Charley's Aunt*, brought to the screen in a series of stylised inserts. It may be regarded as a piece of simple genius, or as a simple piece of hoo-haa. A hair-line for highbrows.

"TREASON."—Harsh, screaming, sensational, and to my mind, degrading Hollywood attempt to do something—about anything—virulent against the Russians, with regard to the painful case of Hungary's Cardinal Mindszenty.

"LA BEAUTÉ DU DIABLE."—Much of this is witty, elegant and delightful, though not quite up to the usual René Clair standard. Above are Nicole Besnard and Gerard Philipe in two of the leading rôles.

★ ★ ★ AT THE

REVIEWS *by C. A. LEJEUNE*

"THE MUDLARK"

THERE has been a good deal of heart-burning in certain bosoms about the choice of *The Mudlark* as the *pièce de résistance* at the recent Royal Performance. The film, of course, is technically British, complying with all the rules laid down by the Board of Trade for this qualification, but although it was made in England, it was made by an American Company with an American star—Irene Dunne—and an American producer and director, and there is no doubt but that the British subject, with which it deals, is seen from a markedly American slant.

I submit that it is no part of a critic's duty, however, to decide whether *The Mudlark* was a good film for an occasion. Others are at liberty to argue *that* point: the critic's function is to decide whether *The Mudlark* is a good film, period. My considered opinion is that it isn't very: it dawdles along; it misses a lot of opportunities for drama; it has no marked individuality of direction; the sub-plot, with a pair of lovers who appear not to have the faintest notion how to act, is dreadful; and as a piece of English history the whole thing is distinctly suspect. Yet, when all is said, I must add quite candidly that I liked it, and that I came out of the cinema having enjoyed a nice, gentle cry.

The story has been sufficiently publicised to need no more than a brief recap. A small boy, grubbing for his living in the mud of the Thames, finds a medallion of Queen Victoria on the body of a dead sailor. He loses his heart to the lady who looks to him like a mother, and makes his way down a coal-chute into Windsor Castle, where the Queen is still mourning the death of Prince Albert. After many adventures, during which he is suspected of complicity in an Irish plot and thrown into the Tower of London, the boy wins all hearts with his devotion: and not only inspires Disraeli to a speech that gets his new Reform Bill through the Commons, but persuades the Queen to emerge from her retirement.

There have been better Victorias on the screen than Irene Dunne's, but one must concede to her a certain dignity and dry humour that is rather pleasing. Andrew Ray, as the little boy, seemed just right to me, and Alec Guinness, as a Disraeli who is rapidly developing from a young political prodigy into an elder statesman, is brilliant—no other word will do him justice. He can say volumes with the infinitesimal lift or droop of an eyelid. His great speech in the House of Commons (straight out of *Hansard*) is as certain to move an audience as it is reputed to have swayed the Members. *The Mudlark* may not be a memorable film, but it is certainly memorable in this one way—that it has educed from a British actor what is probably the finest performance of the year.

★

"LA BEAUTÉ DU DIABLE"

FOR people who make a hobby of collecting the various interpretations of the Faust legend—and you'd be surprised to find how many there are of both—a visit to *La Beauté du Diable* is imperative. René Clair has written and directed a film which adds a new and ironic twist to the old story, by making Faust, through a technical blunder on the part of Mephistopheles, eventually get the better of the Devil. His *Faust* is the only one I know of that has a happy ending: happy, that is, for all but Lucifer and his hosts.

M. Clair's conceit is to make the physical appearance of Faust and Mephistopheles interchangeable. A mocking and personable young devil appears to the ancient Professor Faust in his study, and gives him back his youth, in the first instance, unconditionally. The old professor takes the shape of the young devil, the young devil enters with zest into the outward rôle of the old professor. When circumstances drive the new Faust, who doesn't find life as a penurious youth as easy as he thought it would be, into seeking the further help of Mephistopheles, and the celebrated bond is signed in blood, the signature, "Faustus," would naturally be assumed to be that of the old gentleman by any casual reader. And *that* is where Mephistopheles, self-confessedly a third-rate demon, makes his great mistake.

The film has the merit of novelty, as you can see, and much of it is witty, elegant and quite delightful. The scenes in which Faust first feels the lightness of youth again, floats, as it were, on air, and tosses his cap over the windmill, are really very taking, while Michel Simon's ripe and Gerard Philipe's romantic comedy give just the right contrast to the Faust-Mephistopheles characterisation. But somehow *La Beauté du Diable*, as a whole, fails to become a memorable picture.

After such exciting adventures into fantasy as Cocteau's *La Belle et la Bête* and, even more particularly, his *Orphee*, the Clair adventure seems a little tame. M. Cocteau probably has the secret of it when he observed that the higher a film was intended to soar into fantasy, the deeper it must be rooted in reality. René Clair has always been at his best when his feet were firmly planted in his native soil. He has a pretty talent that we can ill-afford to lose, and it will be a good day when it is securely housed again under the roofs of Paris.

CINEMA ★ ★ ★

PREVIEW

TERENCE RATTIGAN'S one-act stage play, *The Browning Version*, which was originally seen at the Phoenix Theatre in 1948-49, has been made into a film starring Michael Redgrave, Jean Kent and Nigel Patrick. This moving study of school life has a human story concerning Andrew Crocker-Harris, a Classics master who is forced to retire through ill-health. His discontented wife, Millie, starts a passionate love-affair with a young science master, Frank Hunter, which is discovered by Andrew. Rattigan himself wrote the script, and Anthony Asquith directs. The film is due to be seen in London after Christmas.

On the right: Taplow (Brian Smith) delivers a package to Millie Crocker-Harris (Jean Kent), which contains a cigarette-case she gave to her lover, Frank Hunter.

Below: A scene in which Frank Hunter (Nigel Patrick; left) asks Andrew Crocker-Harris (Michael Redgrave; right) a question about the possible promotion of Taplow (Brian Smith).

STAGE.—Mai Zetterling : For her unstrained pathos and charm in Anouilh's queer piece, *Point of Departure*, at the Lyric, Hammersmith.

J. C. Trewin

LITERATURE.—James Aldridge : For that all-too-rare phenomenon, a good novel set in Canada, *The Hunter*.

CHOICE OF THE MONTH

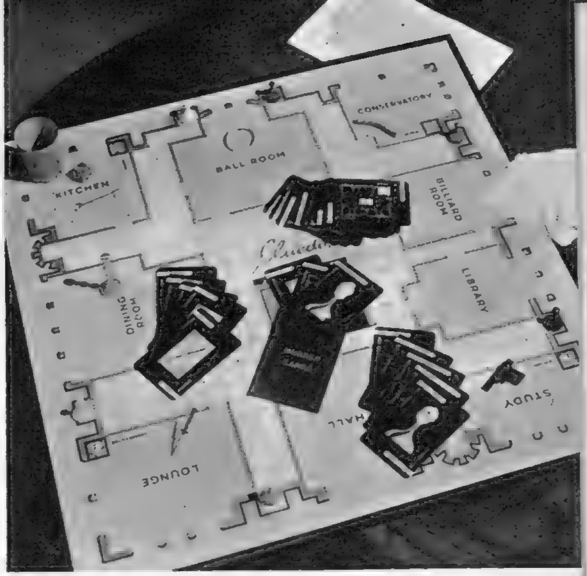
Selected by our Panel of Experts

SCREEN.—Alec Guinness, an actor who is no less at home with Hansard than he is with Shakespeare, and whose ageing young Disraeli is the triumph of *The Mudlark*.

C A Lejeune

RADIO.—Arthur English : For breaking all records for speed of comic patter in "Variety Bandbox."

Frederick Laws



SOCKS for men are easy winners. These are of wool ; circular striped cost 6s. ; imitation Argyle, 10s. 2d., from Jaeger shops.

" CLUEDO "—popular new family game, complete with cards, counters, board and shaker, 25s., from Bentalls, at Kingston, Ealing Broadway, and Worthing.

TRAVEL WALLET with pockets for passport, tickets, dollars and sterling, 44s. 9d. TRAVEL BRUSH with zip-fastened back to hold comb and manicure set, 59s. 6d. Calf STUD BOX, 11s. 9d. PARKER " 51 " pen and pencil set in white and gilt case, £7 2s. 5d. All at Peter Jones.

Christmas almost here . . .

TIME is running out—less than a couple of dozen shopping days before Christmas—and there is still much to buy. If you 're stuck for an idea on what to give to a difficult relative, glance at these presents chosen from stores and shops bursting with exciting seasonal merchandise.

PARTY DRESS for a fashionable member of the youngest set, by Kiddie Clothes. About £4 at Dickins & Jones.

" THERMOS " JUG, blue, green or cream with chrome handle, holds one pint and costs 30s. PHOTO ALBUM in imitation morocco bound in scarlet, 25s. 3d. POWDER CASE with compartment for lipstick, and engine-turned lid, 5 gns. All from Debenham and Freebody.

" KIDDICLOCK " to teach your child to tell the time. A Kiddicraft " Sensible " toy for 15s. 10d., at Selfridges, Harrods, Hamleys, and good toyshops everywhere.

COFFEE PERCOLATOR by " Jonell," with insulated feet, 45s. 9d. IMMERSION HEATER in Pyrex glass, with clip-on egg rack ; boils in under two minutes, 19s. 6d. Silver-plated COCKTAIL SHAKER, one pint capacity, 38s. 6d. All at John Lewis, Oxford Street ; George Henry Lee, of Liverpool, and Cole Brothers, of Sheffield.

KNEE RUG in Shetland wool is the ideal traveller's companion. Hand-woven in colours specially selected by Liberty of Regent Street, 66s.

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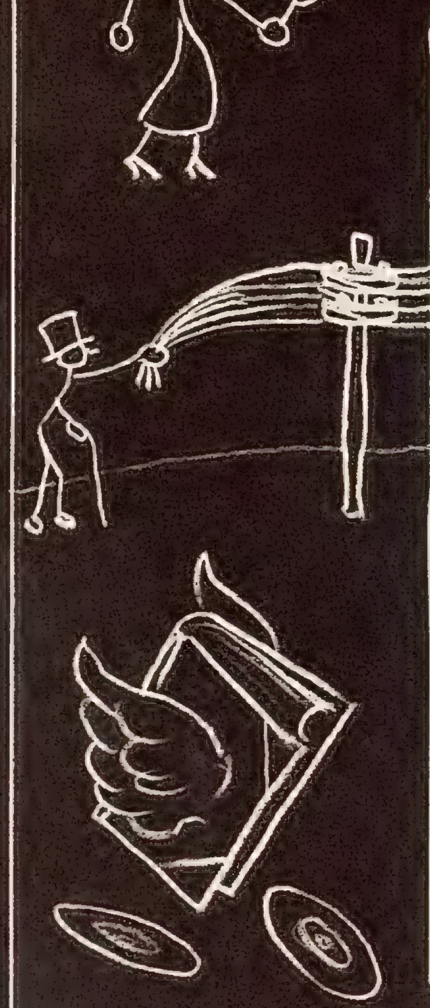


AN ANSWER TO THE CHRISTMAS PRESENT PROBLEM IS A GIFT TOKEN. THEY ARE AS GAY AS AND MUCH MORE USEFUL THAN A CHRISTMAS CARD. HERE ARE A FEW SUGGESTIONS.

Beauty Treatment by token. For "facials," beauty preparations or perfumes from Dorothy Gray, of 32, New Bond Street, and Steiner, of 66, Grosvenor Street, who includes hair-do's, manicure and pedicure. From Helena Rubenstein, of 48, Berkeley Square, for 25s., cleansing, massage, mask and make-up in one treatment. For £2 2s. a specialised oxylation treatment.

Flowers-by-Wire (plants, too). "Interflora's" world-wide organisation enables you to arrange for any florist with the *Winged Mercury* sign in the window to deliver fresh, untravelled flowers or plants five or five thousand miles away within a matter of hours.

Gramophone Record tokens from 5s. to 30s. may be obtained from all H.M.V., Columbia, and Parlophone dealers.

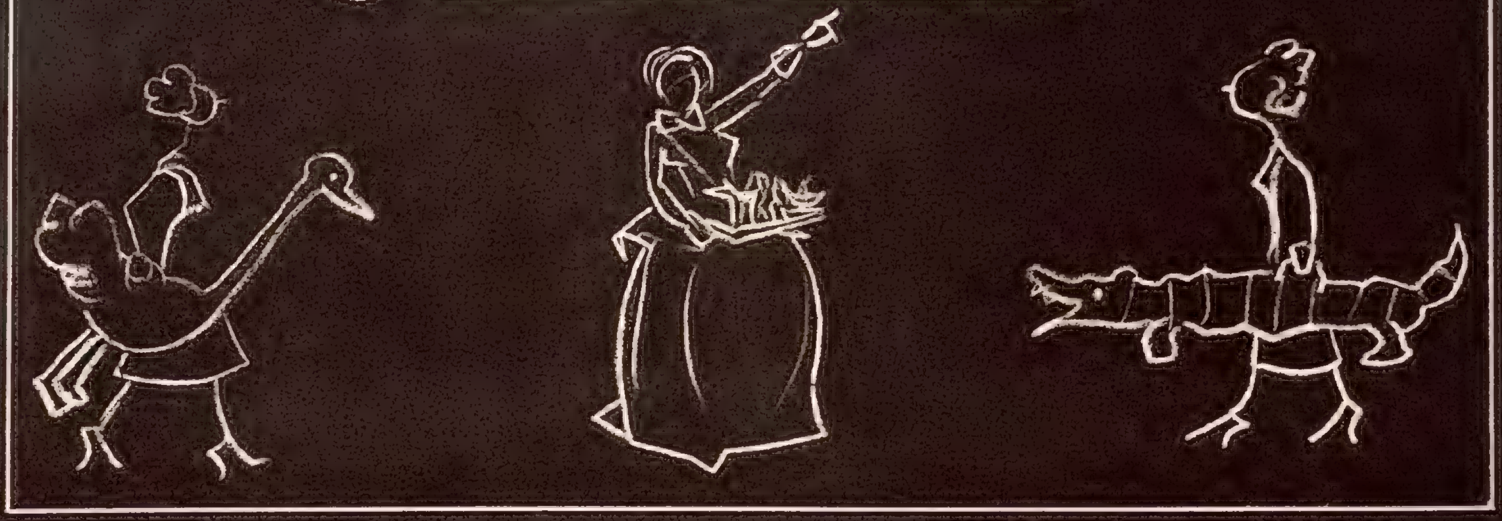
Books. Probably the best-known commodity in the token industry.

Wines and Spirits. At Selfridges a token can be obtained and exchanged at the store for cases of good wine, packed to suit the customer's taste.

Handbags of crocodile or ostrich, French pottery, ash-trays, and a host of other gifts at all prices will be exchanged by Simpsons (Piccadilly) for their Gift Tokens.

Tickets for all theatres, some cinemas, concerts and for travel are available against gift tokens at Keith Prowse, 159, New Bond Street.

"The Sketch." And, of course, there is that token of friendship appreciated by everyone—a year's subscription to *The Sketch*, which only costs £2 16s. 6d. at home, and £2 10s. abroad.



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SEATED serenely at the bar, she has done a hard day's work at her little Mayfair beauty salon. She knows that in the long run face-packs and massage can never remedy the effects of uninitiated drinking — however moderate. That is why she sticks firmly to gin and Rose's Lime Juice, tonight and any other night, in the knowledge that her complexion will remain unblemished and her eyes as bright as jewels — tomorrow and any other morning.

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The man's drink that women appreciate

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DRY FLY SHERRY is the best appetizer and is a gracious welcome to your guests. From your Wine Merchant or:

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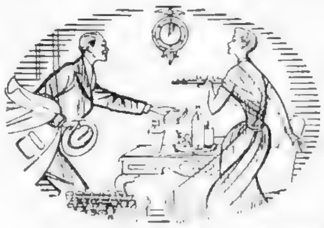

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WHAT GOES ON

Our Puppets Select Their List of Coming Events

★ *This List went to Press last week, so please check with the Daily Papers.*

CEREMONY

The King and Queen attend Queen Juliana and Prince Bernhard's Dinner at Claridge's Hotel on Nov. 22. On Nov. 23, with Queen Juliana and Prince Bernhard, they lunch with the Foreign Secretary at No. 1, Carlton Gardens.

The Queen attends a performance of " A Vista of Fashion " at the New Theatre on Dec. 5.

CUPID

The engagement is announced between:

Richard, son of the late Mr. Michael Archdale Morris, and Mrs. **Archdale Morris**, of Clonmore House, Piltown, Co. Kilkenny, and the Hon. Faith Gabriel **French**, daughter of the late Lord De Freyne, and Lady De Freyne, of French Park, Roscommon, Ireland.

Lord **Northbrook**, and Rowena Margaret, daughter of the late Brig.-Gen. Sir William **Manning**, and of Lady Manning, of Hampton Court Palace, Middx.

Captain David George **Hadow**, M.C., R.A., son of the late Rev. F. B. and Mrs. Hadow, and Clare Margaret, daughter of Mr. Charles and Lady Sybil **Phipps**, of Chalcot, Westbury, Wilts.

George Harold Michael, son of Colonel and Mrs. H. B. **Sankey**, of Whiston Hall, Albrighton, near Wolverhampton, and Darea Joan, daughter of Sir Leonard and Lady **Milburn**, of Guysance Hall, Acklington, Northumberland.

Captain Peter Reginald **Smalley**, 15th/19th The King's Royal Hussars, son of the late Mr. Reginald Smalley, Audmore House, Gonsall, Staffs, and of Mrs. Thomas Openshaw Coupe, Stockton Rectory, Norton, Shropshire, and Antonia Moyna, daughter of Major R. G. **Buchanan**, 5, Sloane Court, S.W.3, and of Mrs. Beeby.

Thomas Henry, son of Colonel the Hon. Oliver and Lady Kathleen **Stanley**, of Plas Llanfawr, Holyhead, and Cherry Angela, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. James **Seely**, of Holly Lodge, Oxton, Notts.

Henry Herman, son of the late Mr. Henry **Winch** and of the late Vera Lady Newborough, and Jean **Cary**, daughter of The Master of Falkland, and of Mrs. Astley-Rushton, and step-daughter of Major J. F. Astley-Rushton, 7th Queen's Own Hussars, B.A.O.R. 8.

SPORT

RACING

Nov. 24, 25.	Ayr and Kempton.
" 27, 28.	Leicester.
" 29, 30.	Cheltenham.
Dec. 1, 2.	Haydock Park.
" 4, 5.	Nottingham.

GENERAL SPORT

RUGBY FOOTBALL: Oxford *v.* Cambridge at Twickenham on Dec. 5.

BOXING: Jack Cappell's Boxing Tournament on Nov. 28; London Amateur Boxing Association Tournament on Nov. 30—both at Royal Albert Hall.

ENTERTAINMENT

Christmas shows often become booked up far ahead, so here we offer suggestions and advance information about holiday entertainments for different age-groups.

PANTOMIMES AND CIRCUSES

Bertram Mills's Circus at Olympia begins on Dec. 19.

" Dick Whittington on Ice " (Empire Pool, Wembley)—with a cast of international skating and pantomime stars. Dec. 19.

" Goody Two Shoes " (London Casino)—with Arthur Askey. Dec. 20.

" Beauty and the Beast " (Westminster)—a Christmas fairy story. About Dec. 20.

Tom Arnold's 4th annual Mammoth Circus show at Harringay. Dec. 21.

" Charlie's Aunt " (Saville)—34th London season. Dec. 21.

" Babes in the Wood on Ice " (Empress Hall, Earls Court). Dec. 21.

" Peter Pan " (Scala)—Margaret Lockwood again as Peter. Dec. 21.

" The Silver Curlew " (Fortune)—Eleanor Farjeon's fairy-story. Dec. 22.

" Babes in the Wood " (Palladium)—with Adele Dixon, Jewel and Warriss, and Sonnie Hale. Dec. 23.

" Mother Goose " (Princes)—with Ethel Revnell, Hy Hazell and Billy Russell. Dec. 23.

" Aladdin " (King's, Hammersmith)—with Clarkson Rose. Dec. 23.

TEEN-AGE SHOWS

" Take It From Us " (Adelphi)—radio's " Take It From Here " team, Joy Nichols, Jimmy Edwards and Dick Bentley, in revue.

" Ace of Clubs " (Cambridge)—Noël Coward's musical thriller, with Pat Kirkwood and Graham Payn.

" Worm's Eye View " (Comedy)—comedy about R.A.F. types; London's longest run.

" Carousel " (Drury Lane)—the famous Rodgers and Hammerstein musical from Broadway.

" Seagulls Over Sorrento " (Apollo)—comedy about sailors; with Ronald Shiner and William Hartnell.

" The Holly and the Ivy " (Duchess)—interesting Christmas family play, with Jane Baxter, Daphne Arthur and Herbert Lomas.

" Ring Round the Moon " (Globe)—a sophisticated fairy story, with Margaret Rutherford, Claire Bloom and Paul Scofield.

" King's Rhapsody " (Palace)—Ivor Novello's Ruritanian musical romance.

" Dear Miss Phœbe " (Phœnix)—period musical adapted from J. M. Barrie's " Quality Street."

" His Excellency " (Piccadilly)—Eric Portman as an ex-docker who becomes Governor of a Mediterranean island.

" Touch and Go " (Prince of Wales)—fast-moving American revue.

" Will Any Gentleman ? " (Strand)—the newest Robertson Hare-Arthur Riscoe farce.

" Reluctant Heroes " (Whitehall)—farce about National Service in the Army.

MUSIC

At the Royal Albert Hall:

Bach's Mass in B minor performed by The London Philharmonic Choir and Orchestra conducted by Sir Adrian Boult, on Nov. 23.

London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Gaston Poulet, on Nov. 26. Solo violin: Campoli.

The London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Royalton Kisch, on Nov. 26.

B.B.C. Symphony Orchestra conducted by Sir Malcolm Sargent, on Nov. 29. Solo pianist: Clifford Curzon.

OPERA

At the Royal Opera House: Covent Garden Opera season continues.

At Sadler's Wells: The opera season continues. On Nov. 28 the first performance of a new production of " The Barber of Seville."

BALLET

At Sadler's Wells: The ballet season continues.

At the Stoll Theatre: Festival Ballet with Alicia Markova and Anton Dolin, until Dec. 16.

ART

At the Guildhall: Bank of England Art Society exhibition from Nov. 27.

" 1950—Aspects of British Art " at Institute of Contemporary Arts, 17, Dover Street, W.1, from Nov. 29.

" British Theatre 1530-1900 " at National Book League, 7, Albemarle Street, W.1.

" Picasso in Provence " at New Burlington Galleries, Old Burlington Street, W.1.

Royal Society of British Artists—Winter Exhibition at R.B.A. Galleries, Suffolk Street, Pall Mall, S.W.1, from Nov. 27.

" A Tribute to Greece "—Paintings by Egon at 70, Grosvenor Street, W.1.

Contemporary British Painters at Wildenstein Gallery, 147, New Bond Street, W.1, from Nov. 29.

SOCIAL EVENTS

A special gala performance of the Markova-Dolin Festival Ballet, in aid of the Three Arts Club, at the Stoll Theatre, on Nov. 27. Her Majesty will attend.

A Ball at the Dorchester in aid of the West London Hospital Nurses' Club on Nov. 28. The Duchess of Gloucester will attend.

The 223rd Foyle's Literary Luncheon at the Dorchester on Nov. 30, in honour of Milton Shulman's book " How to be a Celebrity."

A Christmas Fair for the Blind of London at the Park Lane Hotel on Dec. 11.

The Actresses' Birthday Party at the Dorchester, in aid of the Actresses' League and Women's Adjustment Board, on Dec. 12, from 3 to 6.

A Gala Performance of " Who is Sylvia ? " at the Criterion Theatre, in aid of a special appeal for the training-ship *Foudroyant*, on Dec. 12, at 8.30.

The Cresta Ball will be held at the Dorchester on Dec. 14.

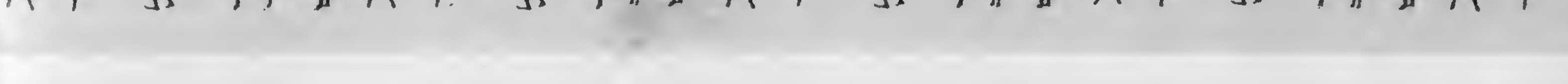
HUNT BALLS

Nov. 24: The Cotswold Hunt Ball at Stowell Park, Glos.

Dec. 1: The Heythrop Hunt Ball in the Officers' Mess at Little Rissington. Sir W. W. Wynn's Hunt Ball at Eaton Hall, Chester. The Hambledon Hunt Ball at the Guildhall, Winchester. The Hertfordshire Hunt Ball at Gorhambury, St. Albans.

Dec. 8: The Eridge Hunt Ball at the Assembly Hall, Tunbridge Wells. The High Peak Hunt Ball at the Spa Hotel, Buxton.

Dec. 15: The Meynell Hunt Ball at Kedleston Hall, Derbyshire. The East Essex Hunt Ball, at the Shire Hall, Chelmsford.



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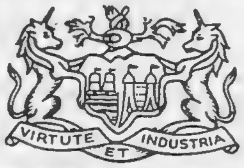

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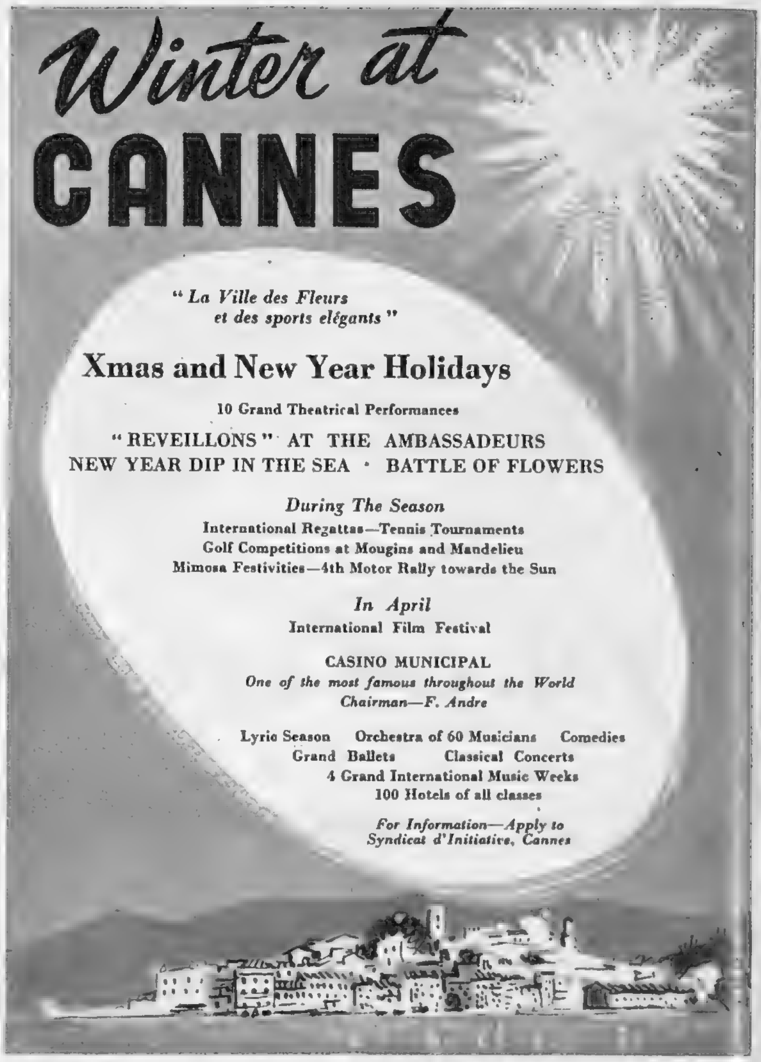

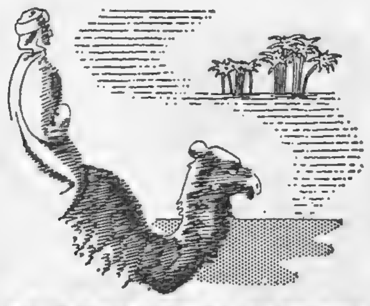

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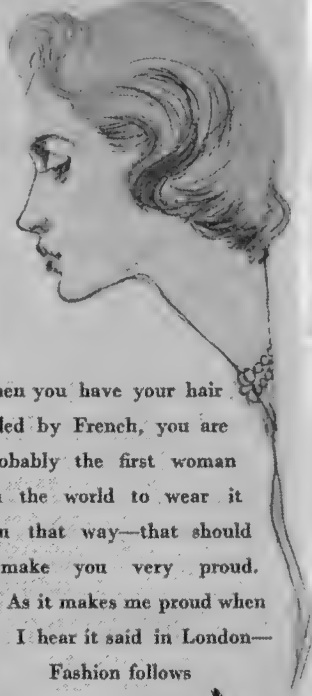

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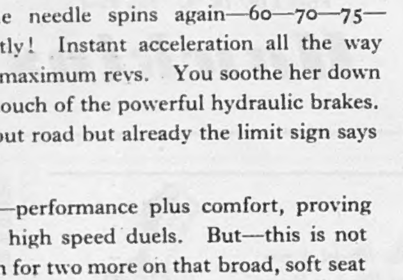

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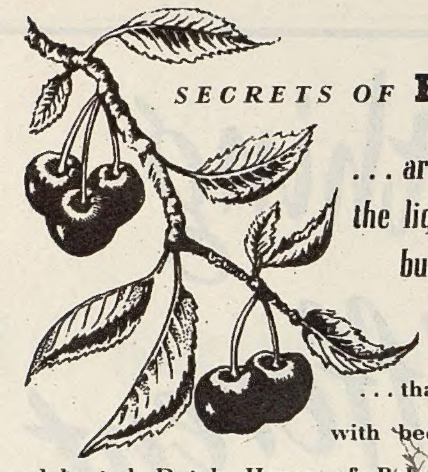

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